

German guerrilla suspect with PKK

DONN (R) — Woman wanted for the spectacular 1993 bombing of a newly-built high security prison in Germany is living in the Middle East as a supporter of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), the group's leader has said. PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan told Germany's Der Spiegel magazine Andrea Wolf was one of several Germans helping the PKK in its bloody battle for Kurdish autonomy in southeast Turkey. "Andrea is living in Kurdistan at the moment," Mr. Ocalan said in an interview released ahead of publication Monday. "no one could make me extradite our friends. When they go back one day, they'll represent the Kurdish cause in their homeland." Ms. Wolf is suspected of involvement in an attack by Red Army Faction (RAF) urban guerrillas on a jail in Weierstadt, south of Frankfurt. They blew up the state-of-the-art prison in March 1993, causing 100 million marks' worth of damage, just days before it was due to be inaugurated.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordanian Press Syndicate
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة منشورة من قبل نقابة الصحفيين الأردنيين

UAE tries to have Bahrain attend summit

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is trying to persuade Bahrain to attend next month's Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit, which it has threatened to boycott because it is being held in Qatar, an official said Saturday. UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan asked the emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, to attend the summit during the emir's recent visit to Abu Dhabi, said the official, who requested anonymity. Bahrain's minister of finance and the economy, Ibrahim Abdul Karim, also relayed a message from the emir to the UAE president while visiting here on Saturday, the official added. Sheikh Zayed was quoted as saying last week that he was sure Bahrain would attend the Dec. 7-9 summit of the GCC, which groups Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman. "I assure you that Bahrain will attend," Sheikh Zayed was quoted as saying in the Saudi daily Okaz.

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Regent: Israelis should come to terms with coexistence with Palestinians based on respect

Crown Prince stresses need to advance peace process and warns of extremism gaining ground

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has stressed the importance of moving forward in the Middle East peace process, warning against falling into the hands of extremists whose ideologies would push the region back into the abyss of war.

Prince Hassan also emphasised that coexistence between Arabs and Jews was essential for creating a Middle East of peace and stability, pointing out that conflict about the future of the region was not restricted to Arab and Jews but exists within the Israeli Jewish community itself.

In an interview with Israeli Television's Channel 2 broadcast on Saturday, Prince Hassan also warned that the "only alternative to peace is war."

The Prince told the "Meet the Press" programme that the Israelis should come to terms with sharing a common living space with the Palestinians in pursuit of coexistence marked by respect.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin believed it could be done, said Prince Hassan. So did Arab leaders who worked towards ending the conflict with the Jewish state, he added.

Stressing the importance of achieving progress in negotiations over Israeli

troop redeployment in Hebron, Prince Hassan noted the linkage between developments in Jordan and the West Bank.

If the conflict over Hebron is resolved, said Prince Hassan, "presumably (peace) talks will begin to gain momentum."

But the important thing is factual change on the ground which people can feel and live with, the Prince said in the interview, which was held at the Royal Court over the weekend.

Prince Hassan said the recent spiral of violence in the Palestinian territories and Israel's opening of a new entrance to a tunnel in Jerusalem in September had caused tension to run high and negatively affected efforts to reach a comprehensive peace in the region.

But he stressed the importance of not "just talking at each other" and the need to address issues in a sincere manner that can lead to peace.

"We can make political noises warning each other" but that will result in playing into the hands of enemies of peace on both sides of the Arab-Israeli divide unless progress is made, said the Prince.

Replying to a question about the status of the Jordanian-Israeli peace, Prince Hassan said more could be done but "it is better to crawl along than to stoop."

The Prince said negotiations on the Palestinian

track can be encouraged by the stability of peace between Jordan and Israel just as Jordan can be affected by what happens in the West Bank.

In that sense, the Prince said that Jordan was interested in stability in the West Bank due to geographic and demographic factors, noting that the Kingdom did not want to have to deal with a fourth wave of refugees.

The Prince told his interviewers that it was extremely important to keep negotiations going, stressing the need to go beyond immediate concerns and obstacles to tackle issues of common interest like water, economic development and cultural interaction.

There is a cluster of economic, human, and development issues on which Arab and Israelis can cooperate for the benefit of the two sides, he said.

Prince Hassan agreed that there could be no lasting peace without resolving the issue of Jerusalem which Palestinians foresee as the capital of their independent state. But he also pointed out the need for inter-religious dialogue which emphasises the common heritage and coexistence.

The spirit of Sarajevo should be kept alive, said Prince Hassan in reference to the human mission he made to Bosnia along with Israeli officials to speak against discrimination and injustice to which Muslims

and Jews were subjected. "We should join forces against discrimination, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," the Prince said.

Cultural dialogue among Arabs and Israelis should also gain momentum so that people can understand and live with each other in respect, he said.

Warning against the negative consequences of considering the term refugees politically incorrect, the Crown Prince said the issues of refugees in terms of the right to compensation or return should remain alive. He criticised the trend towards cutting down the services provided to Palestinian refugees in UNRWA's five provinces of operation.

Speaking about his proposal for setting up an organisation for cooperation in the Middle East, Prince Hassan said the proposed organisation was not an alliance against anybody.

In the absence of an inclusive regional grouping that can address common challenges, the organisation could be an umbrella for debate and political dialogue which will benefit the peoples of the region. But the organisation will not be an alternative to any existing regional grouping, said Prince Hassan, noting the lack of a regional conflict resolution mechanism which leaves challenges to be addressed through crisis management approach.



Contestants of the Miss World pageant from across the world in the south Indian city of Bangalore several hours before the contest on Saturday (Reuters photo)

Miss Greece becomes Miss World 1996

BANGALORE (AFP) — Irene Skliva of Greece won the Miss World 1996 beauty contest at the protest-peppered pageant in the southern Indian city of Bangalore on Sunday.

Current Miss World Jacqueline Aguilera of Venezuela handed over the title to her successor in the Chinnaswamy Stadium packed with 15,000 spectators and dignitaries

from around the world. Eighteen-year-old Skliva was one of the 88 contestants who participated in the 19-day extravaganza, India's first international beauty contest. Miss Colombia Carolina Arango and Miss Brazil Anuska Prado were the runners up.

Police arrest 800 protesters, page 4

Regent meets Uzbek envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday received at the Royal Court Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamilov, who relayed an invitation from the Uzbek leader Islam Karimov to His Majesty King Hussein to visit Uzbekistan.

During the audience the Regent stressed for exerted efforts to fight off "Islamophobia."

"We should combat those who link Islam with terrorism and violence," he said. He called for establishing a "cultural parliament" for Muslims to face all cultural challenges.

"It is time to think of a conference in Amman, Tashkent or any other capital to discuss our regional issues such as economic ones," he said.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Khaled Madhathu attended the meeting.

Regent meets French radio chief

The Regent also received Chairman of the Board of Directors of Radio France Jean Paul.

Prince Hassan stressed the importance of the media to shed light on the important issues such as stability in the Mediterranean region, "Islamophobia," Arab-European relations and inter-faith dialogue.

He pointed out that French President Jacques Chirac's recent visit to the region reminded the world of the human issues that should be tackled, saying that the French concern to this topic would enhance human rights issue.

Attending the audience was Minister of Information Marwan Muasher. Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti also received Mr. Paul and discussed with him means of cooperation between Jordanian and French media.

Cabinet reviews JD1.86m budget

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet reviewed in its ordinary session on Saturday the draft fiscal budget for 1997 before finalising and sending it to Parliament for further discussion, amendments if necessary and endorsement before the end of the year.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, which reported the meeting, did not provide details of the budget.

Finance Minister Marwan Awad was quoted as saying by Reuters that the JD 1.86 billion draft budget envisaged an increase in expenditure of only five per cent. The adjusted fiscal budget for 1996 was JD 1.764 billion, two per cent more than the originally projected (see page 8).

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, briefing reporters after the Cabinet session, said the government considered while preparing the budget

decreasing its expenses within the context of the Kingdom's economic reform programme.

Dr. Muasher also told reporters that the Cabinet also approved an agreement Jordan had signed with Algeria on cooperation in the field of health.

Answering a question on reports that Jordan and Turkey were planning to sign a defence cooperation agreement, the information minister noted that the two countries enjoyed historic military cooperation.

On other issues, Dr. Muasher said a government committee was studying the issue of releasing prisoners under a Royal amnesty and that the final list of prisoners to be freed will be announced soon.

On criticism of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty by Israeli Minister of Infrastructure Ariel Sharon, Dr. Muasher said a meeting

would be held Wednesday between Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Omar Rifai and Mr. Sharon to discuss this issue.

Mr. Sharon, a hardline member of the right-wing Likud party, recently criticised a provision in the peace treaty under which Israel agreed to respect Jordan's right to its share of water from resources that the two countries have access to.

Rejecting the criticism, Ambassador Rifai noted that the peace treaty was signed between two sovereign countries and not between political parties and as such Israel was duty-bound to respect the provisions of the treaty. Dr. Muasher also briefed reporters on Saturday Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's visit today (Sunday) to Spain. The visit, he said, is aimed at strengthening bilateral relations.

45 survive crash of hijacked Ethiopian plane in Comoros

MORONI, Comoro Islands (Agencies) — Forty-five people were found alive after a hijacked Ethiopian Airlines plane came down in the sea off the Comoro Islands, a senior manager at Comoros airport said on Saturday.

"There are 45 survivors and they have found 50 bodies. Most of the survivors have been taken to hospitals but some are in local hotels," Ahmad Chanfe, deputy manager at the Comoros' main airport, said in a telephone interview.

Two hijackers who survived the crash have been arrested by local police, a resident at a hotel near the crash site said.

The Boeing 767 was on a flight from Addis Ababa to Nairobi with 175 passengers and crew on board when it was hijacked in Kenyan airspace, officials said.

Survivors reportedly told

rescuers that the plane had run out of fuel after the hijackers diverted it to Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania.

Local divers and boat owners swung into action to try to rescue survivors as the plane crashed about 100 metres from the beach on the northern part of the islands popular as a tourist destination, a private Comorian pilot said.

He told AFP after visiting the site about 40 kilometres from Moroni that the plane had broken into three pieces and was floating between the beach, the Galawa hotel and a lake.

The colours of the Ethiopian flag were clearly seen on the tail-plane jutting out of the water. He added the co-pilot was alive and being treated at Mitsamiouli hospital, saying he had also seen bodies floating in the water.

Ethiopian government radio FANA said late Saturday that there were 38 sur-

vivors, and 43 bodies had already been pulled from the wreckage.

"They were waiting for information, trying to get in touch with the Ethiopian government, the plane was turning around in the middle of the ocean until there was no fuel," an Ethiopian airline official said.

Speaking from a hotel in the Indian Ocean islands, one witness, Frederic Chretien, also told BBC radio the plane appeared to have run out of fuel.

"There were two terrorists on board, they were apparently trying to negotiate but due to a lack of kerosene, the plane crashed in front of the hotel, one kilometre from the coast," he said.

Mr. Chretien, who said he had spoken to survivors, said the hijackers "were quite panicky."

Leila Khaled gives kidney to ill brother

AMMAN (R) — Palestinian activist Leila Khaled has donated one of her kidneys to save her ill brother, her husband said on Saturday. "The famous freedom fighter Leila Khaled has added to the great gifts to her cause and her people a new humanitarian gift," Fawaz Rashid said. "She donated one of her kidneys to her brother Khaled, who suffered from kidney failure for years." An official at the private hospital where the operation was carried out said the transplant took place on Wednesday. Leila Khaled, who is in her early 50s, commandeered an American TWA airliner in 1969.

Sudan hopes U.N. will reconsider air embargo move

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan is hoping that the United Nations' delaying of a decision on whether to impose an air embargo against Khartoum will give the world body time to reconsider the move, a Sudanese official said Saturday. "Sudan hopes the delay will be a chance for weighing facts so that a fair resolution...will be adopted by the Security Council," the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) quoted Mustafa Othman Ismail, the state minister at the foreign ministry, as saying.

Syria slams Israeli decision to build new Golan settlements

Press says Netanyahu wrecking peace process

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria on Saturday accused Israel of working deliberately to destroy the peace process after the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans to build hundreds of new homes for settlers on the occupied Golan Heights.

State-run newspapers said the move showed that Mr. Netanyahu did not want to make peace with Syria and called for world pressure on Israel to stop its settlement activities.

"Israel's moves to build more settlements and to bring thousands of Israelis to the Golan, shows that Israel, under Netanyahu and the extremist rabbis and generals, is deliberately trying to escalate tension in the region," Tishreen daily said.

"Netanyahu's government does not only want to undermine the peace process but also to detonate the situation in the region and return it once again to the cycle of wars and disasters," it added.

A spokesman for Israel's infrastructure ministry, headed by hardliner Ariel Sharon, said on Friday that 900 new homes would be added to existing settlements on the Golan next year, a sharp rebuff to Syr-

ian demands for the return of the strategic plateau.

"The Netanyahu government is defying international peace efforts by working publicly to make the situation in the region explode and to kill off the American peace initiative based notably on the exchange of land for peace," Syria's official Al Thawra newspaper said.

The Arab League also denounced the plans, saying Mr. Netanyahu was attempting to create a climate of tension in the region and calling on the international community to take a firm stand against Israel's actions.

"This proves that Israel is going back on its fundamental commitments towards the peace process," said Arab League spokesman Ahmad Ben Helli.

Syria and Israel conducted war games in recent weeks in and near the Golan amid exchanged accusations that the other side was preparing for war. The two said they were not planning any attacks.

Syria, which has held five years of sporadic peace talks with Israel, had strongly condemned Mr. Netanyahu, who refuses to exchange occupied Arab territories for

peace and has authorised the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

No talks have been held since Mr. Netanyahu took office in June and Damascus says it will not resume negotiations until Israel agrees to withdraw fully from the Golan.

"The dangerous Jewish settlement programme is a message from Netanyahu's government to Arabs and the world that Israel rejects peace and the peace efforts," Al Thawra said.

"The settlements constitute a direct aggression against Arabs at a time while the world is exerting efforts to resume the peace process which is threatened with death due to Netanyahu's policies," the paper said.

Al Thawra called for an "effective international pressure to force the Israeli government stop settlements and commit itself to the basis of the peace process especially the land-for-peace principle in order to provide the climate which will allow the resumption of this process."

Taleban say girls' education under 'special' system

KABUL (AFP) — The education of Afghan girls has not been banned by the Taleban movement, but only suspended until a segregated system can be organised, the religious militia's education minister said Saturday.

"Lady teachers and girl students will be given permission to return to school when a specific programme has been organised for them by the Taleban," explained Education Minister Maulavi Abdul Salaam Hanifi.

No elaboration of this "specific programme" was given by the minister, except that it must meet the approval of Afghanistan's highest ruling Taleban authorities, based in the southern provincial capital Kandahar.

He stated that under the Taleban, girls up to the age of nine were permitted to go to co-educational schools, but from age 10 they must be segregated from the boys.

"According to Islam the illegal mixing of men and women leads to moral corruption," stated Mr. Hanifi.

He elaborated that moral corruption can lead to "fornication" which can result in the worst of sexually-transmitted illnesses, AIDS.

He stressed that the education of girls was neither prohibited under Islam nor by the Taleban, merely that boys and girls over the age of nine could not attend mixed schools.

"Islam is not against education for anybody, but Islam is against corruption within the education system," he said.

He added that under the new system, which would be implemented when there was "perfect security" in Kabul, girls would be taught by women teachers and boys by men teachers.

The Taleban toppled President Burhanuddin Rabbani Sept. 27, but still face a military threat from a coalition alliance of ex-Kabul government troops and Uzbeks under northern warlord ex-communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum.

Infantry fighting north of Kabul has stagnated on two frontlines, but exchanges of artillery-fire and air-raids are still common.

The education minister declared that if there was any shortage of teachers due to the fact that women could not teach boys and vice versa, it would be made up from the intake of fresh trainees.

"We will have enough teachers. The new graduates from the teachers training colleges and various university institutes will meet any shortages," he stated.

The future status of girl students and women teachers under the Taleban will not become clear for some time yet: all schools in Kabul are currently closed for the winter recess, and will reopen after the Afghan new year in mid-March 1997.

The minister said the fundamentalist movement was not anti-education or anti-women as people in the outside might believe.

"Our uprising was meant to do away with ignorance," he remarked.

An ethnic Uzbek from northern Fariab province, Mr. Hanifi said he had five years of ordinary primary school education before studying theology for 11 years in Karachi at a religious college called a Darul-Uloom or "house of knowledge".

Then followed two years of teaching experience in Pakistani camps for Afghan refugees, he noted.



An Afghan Taleban fighter loads a shell into a multiple rocket launcher about 20 kilometres north of Kabul on Saturday. Despite fierce daily exchanges between the Taleban and ousted government forces led by Ahmad Shah Masood the frontlines have not moved over recent weeks (Reuters photo)

Kuwait plans electrified fence, radar to keep out infiltrators

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait is stepping up security to prevent infiltrators from Iraq by building an electrified fence on land and setting up radar surveillance at sea, the interior minister said Saturday.

Mohammad Khaled Al Sabah said in remarks published in the local press that Kuwait has "a security plan to put an electrified fence on our northern border" with Iraq.

"This security fence will help our men on the border to maintain security and protect the country from infiltrators," the minister said.

Sheikh Mohammad said maritime security has been boosted by linking military radars to equipment used by the interior ministry, but he did not say if the radars would track the sea border with Iraq or have a wider purpose.

The local press often reports illegal crossings from Iraq to Kuwait over the land border and cases of smugglers using Kuwait's coastline to bring in drugs and other contraband.

The government announced plans to build the electrified fence along the 200-kilometre land border with Iraq in September, saying it was aimed at preventing illegal crossings rather a military attack.

Kuwait has already built a five-metre-deep trench and a five-metre-high sand berm on its side of the border with Iraq.

The border is also patrolled by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, set up after the 1991 Gulf war, watching for any unauthorised incursions into the demilitarised zone that extends five kilometres into Kuwait and 10 kilometres into Iraq.

Egyptian mufti: No attacks without government order

CAIRO (AP) — Muslims cannot carry out attacks against Israel or any other enemy unless they are acting under orders of their governments, Egypt's chief religious scholar says.

Sheikh Farid Mohammad Waseel said a holy war against Islam's foes can only be declared by "the authoritative rulers."

"The interest of the group must always supersede the interest of the individual," Sheikh Waseel said in an interview published Saturday in the London-based Arabic newspaper Al Hayat.

"Therefore, the authoritative ruler should work out a general policy for holy war in the proper context," he said.

Some radical groups insist that fighting Israel is a "personal" duty since the Jewish state is occupying Muslim land.

Sheikh Waseel's statement is sure to be disputed because many Muslim scholars, even moderate ones, do not consider their governments as having the right to decide religious questions. More headline groups insist the governments themselves should be opposed.

Earlier this month, Sheikh Waseel was appointed Egypt's mufti, a respected position that makes him the country's chief theologian. Since his appointment, he has also declared that Muslim clergy should stop issuing fatwas, or religious edicts — a right many believe came with the position. He argued that such edicts should only be issued by the mufti as the government appointee.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait aviation workers to delay flights

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait aviation workers union plans to delay all flights from the emirate by one hour this week to press the state-owned Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC) to improve wages, a newspaper said on Saturday. "The Society of Kuwaiti Pilots and Flight Engineers decided yesterday (Friday) to delay all flights from Kuwait airport for an hour," said Al Ra'i Al Aam newspaper. The delays would begin at 6:00 a.m. (0300 GMT) on Wednesday and continue until 8:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) on Sunday, it said. The delays were "a protest measure that the union threatened to develop into a firmer measure," the paper said. "It could become a work stoppage if it did not succeed in making KAC fulfill the demands of the society's members." The society wants a review of basic salaries, overtime payments, special allowances and housing, the paper said.

Militants kill 3 Egyptian policemen

MINYA (R) — Three militants disguised as policemen on Saturday opened fire on a police post in the Minya province of southern Egypt, killing two non-commissioned officers and a guard, police sources said. The attack on the police post at Deir Marwas, in the Mallawi region around 300 kilometres south of Cairo, also injured two policemen and a civilian, they added. The gunmen, dressed in black police uniforms, raked the police post with automatic weapons fire as they drove past in a red van before fleeing the scene, the sources said. They later abandoned the van and continued their escape in a car waiting by the side of the road, they said.

UAE court to rule on Filipino appeal

DUBAI (R) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) court will next month rule on an appeal by a Filipino sentenced to death for killing an Indian man, the Philippines embassy said on Saturday. "The judges said they needed more time to study the matter," an embassy spokesman said. "The court will issue a ruling on Dec. 28." The federal supreme court in Abu Dhabi was scheduled to hand down a verdict on Saturday in the case of John Aquino. Aquino was sentenced to death by a criminal court in the emirate of Ajman in 1989 for stabbing to death Harbajan Singh and the attempted murder of another Indian during an argument. A higher court later upheld the death sentence. The federal supreme court makes the final ruling on death sentences, but any execution must be approved by UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan.

Turkey blocks award for jailed Kurd

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's justice ministry stopped a group of Italian lawyers from entering an Ankara prison on Friday to present jailed Kurdish Deputy Leyla Zana with honorary citizenship of the city of Rome. "The municipal council of Rome...gave honorary citizenship of the city to three women who defend human rights in the world, one of them was Leyla Zana," Dino Frisullo of the lawyer's group told reporters in front of the jail. Ms. Zana, who became a member of Turkey's parliament in 1991, is serving a 15-year jail term for alleged involvement in the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). Mr. Frisullo said Ms. Zana's lawyer Yusef Alatas would hand her the award on their behalf.

Turkey accuses Greece of rebuffing reconciliation efforts

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller on Saturday accused Greece of evading efforts to improve the ties between arch rivals Ankara and Athens.

"We have learned that Greece has rejected a call by some European Union (EU) members for starting a dialogue between Turkey and Greece," Mrs. Ciller said in a written statement.

"This attitude of refraining from efforts to resolve its problems with Turkey, on the one hand, shows

the weakness of Greece's theses and on the other hand makes Greece responsible for the current no solution situation," Mrs. Ciller said.

Turkish newspapers said that several EU members, led by the EU's current president Ireland, had recently asked Greece to enter into dialogue with Turkey, but that Greek Foreign Minister Theodor Pangalos had turned them down.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members Turkey and

Greece are deeply divided over Cyprus and the Aegean Sea.

The two countries came to the brink of war in January over sovereignty of a handful of uninhabited Aegean islets. Only heavy U.S. diplomatic pressure prevented an armed confrontation.

Since then Greece has been vetoing planned EU financial aid to Turkey in connection with a customs union agreement between Ankara and the union which took effect at the beginning of this year.

Last week, Turkey blocked the use of NATO forces by the Western European Union in retaliation for a Greek move to obstruct Ankara's participation in operations by the European defence group.

Turkey says Aegean disputes with Greece should be resolved through bilateral negotiations while Athens maintains it has no intention of discussing matters regarding its sovereignty with Ankara.

15 killed, 20 wounded in south Mogadishu fighting

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least 15 people were killed and 20 injured in violent clashes overnight between rival militia in southern Mogadishu, witnesses said Saturday.

The fighting, which continued until early Saturday, was between supporters of rival warlords Hussein Mohammad Aided and Osman Hassan Ali Atto.

Hundreds of families fled from the districts worst hit by the fighting, particularly Bullo Waga, towards the north of the Somali capital.

A witness said that a mortar shell fell within the compound of the United Nations Development Programme, killing three people and injuring five others.

A spokesman for the Atto faction accused Aided men of having started the fighting. But a leading member of the Aided militia countered that Atto men had bombed residential districts of south Mogadishu.

The fighting came after four days of relative calm. Dozens of people had been killed or injured in

the same part of the city in the past few days.

Mr. Aided and Mr. Atto head rival factions within the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance and are wrestling over the leadership of the movement and control of southern Mogadishu.

The north of the capital is controlled by Ali Mahdi Mohammad, leader of the Somali Salvation Alliance.

Mr. Aided, Mr. Atto and Mr. Ali Mahdi agreed on a ceasefire at a mediation meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, under the auspices

of Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi in October.

The factions respected the truce for a few days after it was announced, and renewed fighting in recent weeks.

The new violence came amid reports by international non-governmental organisations that some areas in the Horn of Africa country could face new droughts and famine and thousands were at risk.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
14:05...Fievels American Tails
14:30...You Bet Your Life
15:00...Cajon
15:30...Week-Ends Spectacular
16:00...Doc...World Echo
16:30...The Famous Five (Drama)
17:00...News Flash
17:02...Documentary
17:15...Search and Rescue
18:00...Magazine...Fait Pas Rever
19:00...Le Journal
19:15...Magazine...Sports Et Musique
19:30...News Headlines
19:35...Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00...Auto-Classics
20:30...The Album Show
21:10...Doc...Hold Up the Sun
22:00...News in English
22:25...Drama...Cover
23:15...Miami Vice
23:59...Yes, Minister

PRAYER TIMES
04:46...Fajr
06:07...Sunrise/Duha
11:22...Dhuhr
15:13...Asr
16:37...Maghreb
17:58...Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swetieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.
775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel.
827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932
Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Temperatures are expected to be slightly above average with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, moderate weather conditions will prevail, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max temp.

Amman...10/21
Aqaba...16/28
Deserts...08/22
Jordan Valley...16/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 20, Aqaba 28 Humidity readings: Amman 63 per cent, Aqaba 24 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mukhlis Halaseh...819220
Dr. Ruhi Sukkar...856457
Dr. Fadil Al Khatib...865456
Dr. Yusef Al Faqih...790104
Firas pharmacy...661912
Ferdous pharmacy...778336
Al Asema pharmacy...637055
Nabulakh pharmacy...623672
Al Salam pharmacy...636730
Yacoub pharmacy...644945
Shmeisani pharmacy...637660
Najib pharmacy...847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qanu...281484
Al Quds pharmacy...—
ZARQA:
Dr. Issa Al Omari...901261
Khalid Maternity...985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre...637111

Civil Defence Department...661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue...845845
Civil Defence Emergency...630341
Rescue Police...192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade...617101
Blood Bank...775121
Highway Police...843402
Traffic Police...896390
Public Security Dept...630321
Hotel Complaints...605800
Price Complaints...661176
Water & Sewage Complaints...897467
Amman Municipality Complaints...787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)...121
Overseas Calls...010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs...623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs...661101
Jordan Television...773111
Radio Jordan...774111
Water Authority...680100
J. Electricity Authority...815615
Electric Power Co...636381
RJ Flight Information...08-52200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre...81381332
Khalid Maternity...644281/6
Ajlakh Maternity...642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity...642362
Malhas, J. Amman...636140
Palestine, Shmeisani...607071

Shmeisani Hospital...669131
University Hospital...845845
Al-Muasher Hospital...667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali...666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali...666164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen...777101/3
Al-Bashir...775111/26
Army, Marka...891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital...602240/50
Amal Hospital...674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery...865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital...09983323
Zarqa National Hospital...09986732
Ibn Sina Hospital...09990960
Al Hikma Modern Hospital...09990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital...021275555
Greek Catholic Hospital...02127225
Ibn Al Nafes...021247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital...03314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

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ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:35...Jeddah (RJ)
08:50...Larnaca (RJ)
09:15...Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:30...Bombay, Aqaba (RJ)
09:50...Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:05...Beirut (RJ)
10:15...Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:45...Jakarta (add) (RJ)
16:45...New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:00...Paris (RJ)
17:45...Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:10...London (RJ)
19:30...Athens (RJ)
19:30...Tunis (RJ)
19:35...Vienna (RJ)
19:40...Rome (RJ)
22:25...Frankfurt (RJ)
23:00...Gatwick, Aqaba (add) (RJ)
23:10...Cairo (RJ)
05:00...Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights
06:20...Tel Aviv (LY)
12:40...Bahrain (GF)
15:20...Moscow (SU)
15:30...Dubai (EK)
20:10...Beirut (ME)
20:30...Cairo (MS)
23:10...Istanbul (TK)
23:50...London, Beirut (BA)
01:25...Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights
09:20...Aqaba (RW)
18:55...Tel Aviv (RW)
DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20...Beirut (RJ)
07:30...Aqaba, Gatwick (add) (RJ)
10:45...Amsterdam, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:00...Tunis (RJ)
11:05...Vienna (RJ)
11:10...Aqaba, London (RJ)
11:15...Rome (RJ)
12:20...Athens (RJ)
20:00...Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
20:10...Cairo (RJ)
20:30...New Delhi (RJ)
20:40...Damascus (RJ)
21:00...Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:00...Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:45...Bangkok (RJ)
23:45...Sanaa (RJ)
23:59...Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights
06:30...London (KJ)
07:00...Beirut (ME)
07:15...Tel Aviv (LY)
07:35...Damascus, London (BA)
13:30...Doha (GF)
16:35...Moscow (SU)
21:25...Cairo (MS)
Royal Wing (RW) Flights
09:50...Aqaba (RW) (departing from Marka Airport)

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Arr. Amman...5:00 pm every Sunday

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Banana (imported)...800/650
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Cauliflower...230/180
Cucumber (large)...140/80
Cucumber (small)...220/170
Eggplant...140/80
Garlic...700/500
Grapes...340/260
Lemon...370/180
Marrow (large)...140/100
Marrow (small)...250/200
Onion (green)...300/180
Onion (dry)...170/120
Olive (green)...450/400
Olive (black)...700/500
Orange...550/350
Pear...650/450
Pepper (hot)...260/200
Pepper (sweet)...200/120
Potato...240/180
Spinach...250/100
String Bean...550/350
Tomato...280/200

Minister expresses dismay over electric workers strike

By Odeh Odeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A strike of electric workers continued Saturday for the fourth day, with the workers union and the management of the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) holding adamant to their opposing positions.

Expressing dismay with the deadlock, Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakban Sunday threatened government intervention to bring the strike, of approximately 3,000 workers, to an end, stating that Article 116 of the 1996 Labour Law empowers the ministry to dissolve the union through a court injunction.

"The strike is illegal and one way to end it is through the dissolution of the workers union which is violating the law," he said.

"The workers union should immediately end the strike in respect of the Jordan Labour Law and its various provisions," the minister added.

Meanwhile, President of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU) Khaled Shreim Saturday gave an ultimatum to the Electricity Workers Union

ordering them to return to work.

"I would like to emphasise again that the cessation of work is illegal and in contravention of the Labour Law. We live in a state of institutions where the law is respected and if the strike continues it will cause serious harm to workers' gains as well as to their jobs," he said.

"We are demanding that you terminate the strike, return to work and enter into negotiations in accordance with the provisions of the Labour Law, otherwise we will be forced to hold you responsible for any consequences," Mr. Shreim said, adding, "we reserve the right to apply federal rules against the violators thereof and we might exercise our right to impose penalties on the union as we are determined to safeguard the national interest as well as the interests of the workers, themselves."

He told the Jordan Times that Article 26 of the Federation Labour Law empowers him to suspend the electricity workers union's membership in the federation and create a new administrative committee to supervise the union's work until the next union elections.

Mr. Shreim asserted that his ultimatum to the union was issued in order to avert any harm to worker interests and to stop any potential damage to the public interest.

However, Union President Khalifa Ma'aita reaffirmed worker determination to pursue the strike until their demands have been met.

The workers are demanding a hardship allowance, a 15th annual salary and other benefits.

Mr. Ma'aita said that the workers will remain at home Sunday and will not gather outside their company's offices so as to avert friction with any party.

He described the attitude of the Minister of Labour and the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions as biased in favor of JEPCO management and stated that the federation's actions have hardened the company management's stand.

Mr. Ma'aita asserted that if the need arose he would sue the minister for what he termed as a legal violation.

In order to maintain electric power supplies and confront any emergency, the union has assigned two alternating technical teams to monitor the company's emergency offices.

Prime Minister discusses bilateral ties with Uzbekistan foreign minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamilov Saturday held a meeting with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and the two discussed ways of promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields.

The Uzbekistan minister told Jordan Television subsequent to the meeting that discussions also covered the Iraqi situation and international issues of common concern as well as the general situation in Central Asia and the Middle East.

Mr. Kamilov said that under the former Soviet Union, Jordan and Uzbekistan did not have direct ties but that now opportunities exist for establishing strong ties.

Mr. Kamilov said that his



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Saturday meets with Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamilov to discuss relations between both countries (Petra photo)

country fully supports Jordan's peace endeavours, will

continue to support the establish ties based on mutual respect with all nations in

the region including Israel.

"We have agreed upon the promotion of cultural and trade relations between our countries as a first stage in building strong ties," Mr. Kamilov said, who had earlier held a separate meeting with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Khaled Madadha.

Discussion at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, covered trade, cultural exchanges and tourist relations and according to a statement issued following the meeting, Mr. Madadha outlined the latest developments in the Middle East region to Mr. Kamilov as well as coordination of positions between Uzbekistan and Jordan at meetings of the Organisation of Islamic Conference and the United Nations.

Women receive death penalty in murder case

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Amman Criminal Court last week sentenced two women to death after they were found guilty of shooting and mutilating a 45-year old man in the Sawfawi town of Mafrq in April 1996.

Amira Salem, 25, and Eidah Hussein, 25, respectively became the third and fourth woman to be sentenced to death by the Criminal Court this year.

The Thursday verdict brings the total to 22 people sentenced to death this year.

The court tribunal, comprised of Justices Kamal Falah, Ahmad Moniani and Abdul Hamid Sa'ed, found both women guilty of the premeditated murder of Murad Mohammad Yousef, Ms. Salem's husband, and Ms. Hussein's neighbour, on April 10, 1996, in his house in Mafrq.

According to court documents, Ms. Salem plotted to kill her husband because "he regularly physically abused his wife and had threatened to marry another woman and leave her."

Ms. Salem asked her neighbour, Ms. Hussein to help her kill her husband, a mechanic, as retribution for the abuse, the court said adding that the

women had purchased a gun three months before the murder.

"The two decided to deceive Mr. Yousef by offering him Ms. Hussein as a mistress, rather than marrying another woman and he agreed," the court added.

On the night of the murder, Ms. Hussein went to the couple's home and asked the victim to lay face down on the couple's bed while she undressed and his wife watched, it said.

"Eidah then drew a gun and shot him four times in the head and back. The two women then sat, drank coffee and smoked cigarettes," court transcripts reported.

The two women then mangled Mr. Yousef's body and placed it in eight separate plastic bags, burned his head and boiled it to conceal the murder, according to the court. The women then reportedly dumped the plastic bags in cesspools around Mafrq.

The body parts were retrieved two days after the murder was committed.

The verdict will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within a month.

Men sentenced to hard labour

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The State Security Court Saturday sentenced five people to prison terms of 15 years with hard labour on charges of plotting to carry out extremist attacks, and acquitted a sixth person, accused of slandering His Majesty King Hussein.

The five men declared guilty by the court were Tha'er Yousef Ghanem, 24, Shadi Jawdat Taha, 19, Yousef Ahmad Amar, 22, Ghasan Fa'eq Musmar, 27, and Ibrahim Mohammad Abdul Thaher Zein Abdeine.

The five were originally charged by military prosecution with assault, intent to block authorities from exercising their due responsibilities in accordance with the Constitution and the distribution of pamphlets slanderous to the King.

But in Saturday's court session the military tribunal, comprised of Justices Yousef Faouri, Na'el Masadeh and Salem Saudi, resolved to amend the charge, which could have carried the death penalty, to a distinct charge of plotting to carry out extremist attacks.

They were acquitted of the charge of slander as "the pamphlets seized on their persons, which the prosecution had charged were slanderous to the King, had nothing printed upon them against the King."

Abdul Rahim Mohammad Safarid, 22, who was charged with slandering King Hussein and tried with the five others, was acquitted by the same court for lack of evidence.

In its ruling, the court said that it relied on the defendants' confessions and their subsequent re-enactment of the crime.

During their testimonies on Sept. 1, all six defendants retracted confessions they signed while under interrogation, claiming the statements were extracted under duress.

The defendants maintained that they were subjected to psychological and mental torture before being handed over to military prosecutors.

Five of the six defendants, were charged by the military prosecution of plotting to attack the General Intelligence Department (GID) building in Baqaa on the eve of Dec. 26, 1994.

Testifying for the prosecution three months ago, GID officers said that, on the night of the armed attack, they were unable to determine who launched the attack on the GID premises and only that they exchanged fire with two hooded men.

According to the charge sheet, the first and second defendants, Tha'er Ghanem and Shadi

Taha, showered the building with bullets from machineguns, injuring one officer, before fleeing the scene.

The sixth defendant (Ibrahim Mohammad Abdul Thaher Zein Abdeine) was apprehended by the authorities, three days before the incident occurred, on a different charge. He was standing trial in the GID case on charges of complicity in plotting the attack and also of slandering the King.

The military prosecution charged that the men conducted the attack to avenge the arrest of Mr. Zein Abdeine, who, the prosecution alleged, was the group leader, three days previous. They are also accused of attacking GID offices to avenge the State Security Court's sentencing, on Dec. 24, 1994 of 11 Islamists to death, and an additional seven to imprisonment.

The prosecution charged that the suspects started their activities in April 1994 and plotted to carry out extremist attacks on tourists and security departments in the Kingdom.

Following the verdict's announcement, defence attorneys said they were planning to appeal the verdict to the Court of Cassation.

"The sentences were quite harsh, especially for the fourth and fifth defendants, who did not participate in the alleged attack on the GID building and we are planning to appeal the verdict," Attorney Mohammad Dweik told the Jordan Times.

Also Saturday, the State Security Court acquitted an attorney on charges of slandering the King in June of 1996, "for lack of evidence."

Attorney Mohammad Salameh Dweik, 42, was released after the military tribunal, comprised of Judge Yousef Faouri, and Judges Na'el Masadeh and Ahmad Ayash, cleared him of the charge. The court said based its decision to clear the attorney due to "the inconsistency of testimonies from prosecution and defence witnesses in the case."

Moreover, the court added that three of the prosecution witnesses, who claimed that they heard Mr. Dweik slandering the King, had left the country and the court is discouraged from taking written statements as testimony.

"Since the evidence is not sufficient and there are contradictory testimonies, the court decided to acquit Mr. Dweik," Judge Faouri said.

Mr. Dweik, who pleaded not guilty to the charge, was apprehended on June 13 on charges of slandering the King. His arrest came following a neighbour's complaint that he made slanderous remarks against the King and government.

What's Going On

CONCERT

• Performance by the European Union Chamber Orchestra at Prince Hassan Auditorium, University of Jordan at 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

• Performance of Christmas carols by the Ahliah School for Girls' choir band at the Jordan River Designs, Jabal Amman, First Circle, at 5:00 p.m. (Tel. 613081).

LECTURE

• Lecture (in English) by German artist Yona Joest at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, entitled "My Mosaic" at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

• Photography exhibition by Lily Bandak entitled "Images of the Arab World" at the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association, exhibition hall, Sweifeh, until January 1.

• Works by Arab artists residing in Spain Zafer Aduan, Issam Ta'i, and Haken Sa'di at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina, until Dec. 3.

• Works by Jalal Ariqat and Larisa Najjar at Instituto Cervante, until Dec. 6.

• Retrospective exhibition by Berlin-based Syrian artist Marwan Kassab-Bachi at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Dec. 10.

• Works by Syrian artist Mustafa Ali at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens St. until Nov. 30.

• Aspects from modern Jordanian plastic art by several artists entitled "Message" at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 28.

• Photo panels and mosaics exhibition by artist Yona Joest entitled "Petra — A Cosmological Dialogue" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Nov. 30.

• Works by twenty four artists from Iraq, Holland, Lebanon, Vietnam, Spain, Greece, Curacao, Indonesia, Russia, and Chile) entitled Houd and Hamer "Art in Cultural Transmission" at the Royal Society of Fine Art, Jabal Weibdeh until Nov. 30.

• Photo exhibition by Basma Asfour entitled "Doubles Regards" at the French Cultural Centre, until Nov. 28.

Establishment of centre ignites debate; Human rights activists demand flexible mandate

By Maria Bizri

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Nearly four years after a Royal Decree called for the establishment of a Centre for the Studies of Freedom, Democracy, and Human Rights, there is still no end in sight to the disagreement over the centre's functions and missions.

There appears to be no conclusion reached from deliberations held recently to discuss the long-awaited setting up of the centre. The deliberations took place at a round-table discussion organised by The Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) and Al-Riadeh Centre for Information and Studies, in an attempt to assess government amendments to the centre's mandate.

Members of parliament, lawyers, and members of the Royal Committee which first drafted the proposed legislation said the government's introductions and alterations to the proposed document virtually leave the centre impotent.

Stressing that the government's amendments to certain sections of the draft render the centre and its mandate ineffective, Ishak Khairy, president of the Freedoms Committee at the Professional Unions Association and participant at the round table said, "The amendments to the proposal restrict the authority of the centre and make it incapable of carrying out its intended duties independently."

In February 1993, His Majesty King Hussein issued a Royal Decree calling for the creation of a 19-member Royal Committee to draw up the framework of the centre. Nine months later that committee presented its proposal to the King.

In accordance with the Constitution, the proposal was then sent to the Prime Ministry for approval. It was first amended by the government of HRH Prince Zeid Bin Shaker, and later by the Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's government. The amended proposal was approved by the Cabinet last May and forwarded to Parliament.

The amendments, however, proved controversial and unsatisfactory to members of the Royal Committee.

During the round-table, human rights activists demanded that the centre be established by a special law allowing it to function with certain liberties.

The government, on the other hand, while appearing to agree, would like to see the draft law watered down to curb the authority and limit the mandate and aims of the centre, participants contended.

Citing as an example of such limitations, attorney Najeeb Rachdan, chairman of the Royal Committee, stressed that in drafting the law the committee viewed the right to Arab Unity as a basic right of every citizen. But this right, he said, was deleted from the draft document during government amendment.

Mr. Rachdan added that the amendments changed certain words in some sections of the proposal, (sections 4, 5, and 6). Others (sections 8, 9, and 10), he said, which dealt with the centre's right to investigate cases of alleged human rights violations and submit related reports to the King and the Prime Ministry on the status of freedoms and human rights in the Kingdom, were deleted altogether.

Agreeing with Mr. Rachdan, the round-table chairman, Senator Taher Hikmat said the privileges embodied in the Royal Decree are being eroded by such amendments and the centre is being robbed of its powers as endowed by the King.

Also participating in the discussion, former Deputy Riyad Nawayseh said that should these amendments take effect, the centre would become a mere publicity stunt designed to impress the international community.

With the proposal now before Parliament, Deputy Toujan Faisal, also a round-table participant, considered the Parliament's authority to further alter the draft legislation. She suggested that the best way to reach an agreeable end is for

all concerned parties to come together and discuss the draft law, adding that Jordan should seek to learn from the experiences of other similar institutions.

International law expert and columnist Waleed Sadi questioned whether the discussion taking place was intended to determine the status of the centre as a governmental institution or not.

He said that the authority of the centre should be defined in a manner that would give the centre the capacity to build an infrastructure in order to deal with issues such as human rights, freedom, and democracy. For that purpose, the centre must be a non-governmental organisation capable of solving any problems that occur, first and foremost in the Kingdom rather than the region, Dr. Sadi stressed.

Speaking from the governments platform, Minister of Administrative Developments Kamal Naser said that the centre itself is a real development in the status of human rights in the Kingdom, and that the changes suggested by the government were relatively minor.

Dr. Naser said the centre will still have the authority to question reports. He added that the issue of Arab unity as a basic right of citizenry is a specific rather than a general right and thus he questioned whether incorporating such a right in the objectives of the centre was necessary.

Suggesting what sort of principals should be retained to work out a solution to the controversial law as it stands today, Ms. Faisal offered that the best way of dealing with the problem is by inviting attorneys, intellectuals, press, and all concerned parties to participate in a dialogue which would assure the objectivity of the final proposal.

The changes (as introduced by the government) run the high risk of the centre becoming a tool in the hands of the authorities rather than an independent agency, participants warned.

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Yeltsin orders Russian troops out of Chechenya

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in a surprise change of tactics, Saturday ordered Russian troops to leave the break-away region of Chechenya.

The order came hours before Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and the head of the Chechen rebel government Aslan Maskhadov were due to meet outside Moscow to sign an agreement regulating relations between Russia and the separatists.

Mr. Yeltsin's order and the expected accord appeared to reflect a new Russian strategy of disengagement from the southern Caucasian territory it tried to secure in 21 months of fighting.

Having failed militarily, Moscow is now keen to secure its interests in Chechenya through economic ties.

After a breakthrough on Aug. 31 peace deal between Moscow and the rebels secured by now-sacked security boss Alexander Lebed, Mr. Yeltsin said he was against a hasty troops withdrawal.

But under the deal most Russian troops have already

left Chechenya, where thousands of them died in fruitless and bloody fighting.

The status of the two brigades that remained was one of the most contentious issues dividing Moscow and the rebels.

Moscow had wanted the two brigades to stay in Chechenya permanently but rebels insisted all Russian troops leave.

Yakov Firsov, a spokesman for Russia's north Caucasus military district, told Reuters the two brigades were the last remaining Russian units in the predominantly Muslim territory.

An Interior Ministry official told Interfax News Agency the target for the troop withdrawal was Jan. 27 — the day of general elections in Chechenya — but most of the units may leave before the end of the year.

Sergei Yushenkov, a prominent liberal member of parliament, praised Mr. Yeltsin's decision as "a real step in the search for a compromise". Interfax News Agency reported.

Moscow could expect that

in turn the Chechen separatists would soften their position at the talks, he said.

But General Lev Rokhlin, who once commanded Russian troops in Chechenya and now is a prominent member of parliament, denounced Mr. Yeltsin's decision.

He told Interfax that without Moscow military control, Chechenya would quickly turn into a supplier of arms, drugs and criminals to Russia.

Despite improved relations between the two sides a permanent political settlement remains elusive, with the Chechen side insisting on full independence and Moscow trying to find a way of keeping the region within the Russian Federation.

A government spokesman said the meeting between Mr. Chernomyrdin and Commander Maskhadov at a government residence outside Moscow to sign an accord would be closed to the press.

It mainly covers economic reconstruction of the region and also includes guarantees for tens of thousands of

Russians caught up in the 21 months of bloody fighting.

A draft agreement obtained by Reuters Saturday said the two sides agreed to restore exchange of goods and services by Dec. 1 and work out customs regulations.

Another agreement describing "special economic relations" between Moscow and Chechenya was to be worked out after the election in the region.

Moscow has been mulling a proposal to make Chechenya a free economic zone.

More importantly the two sides vowed to sign a special deal on transportation and processing of oil on Chechen-held territory. The rebel government promised to guarantee safety of oil processing plants and oil pipelines.

The region was an important refining centre before the conflict. Vast amounts of Caspian Sea oil is due to be transported from Azerbaijan to Western markets via Chechenya.



Indian policemen arrest one of the protesters during a demonstration staged against the Miss World Pageant, in the southern Indian city of Bangalore Saturday. Security officials are increasing protection for the contest after right-wing Hindu and women's groups led a protest saying the contest helps commercialisation and exploitation of women (Reuters photo)

Police arrest 800 protesters at Miss World 1996 competition

BANGALORE, India (AFP) — Police arrested 800 protesters here and searched for a feminist who threatened to burn herself to death in protest at the Miss World Competition which holds its grand finale later Saturday.

City Police Commissioner Sarat Chandra Burman said his men were trying to track K.N. Shashikala, leader of the Mahila Jagran (Women's Awareness Forum), who has threatened to commit suicide along with 14 other supporters.

"We are looking for her ... we do not know when and where she will surface," he said, adding security had been further stepped up amid fears that Hindu hard-liners could march on the beauty contest site.

Com. Burman said police arrested 800 leftwingers and hardline Hindu protesters opposed to the event which ends Saturday midnight (1830 GMT) when current Miss World Jacqueline Aguilera of Venezuela will name her successor.

"Some 600 people were arrested during the morning and we picked up 200 other protesters during the afternoon," the police chief said.

He said posters of Shashikala had been pasted around the 20,000-seat Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium to pre-

vent the 38-year-old activist from entering the venue where Miss World 1996 will be picked from 88 contestants.

Shashikala has vowed to set herself on fire by wearing clothes made of highly-flammable material.

More than 10,000 security troops are guarding the stadium and visitors will be screened thoroughly before being allowed to enter, officials said.

Com. Burman said a general shutdown called by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) had "little impact" in Bangalore.

"Life is normal in the city," he said.

Police shooed away scores of journalists from a media centre in the stadium as a security step ahead of the finale.

Witnesses said the media centre had been closed off. "The police have completely sealed off the centre and asked journalists and technicians to leave ... There is no one here," said Sudhakar of the Clea Public Relations Pvt Ltd, publicity managers of the show.

Some 350 journalists from Indian and western media have reached Bangalore for the protest-peppered show.

The 19-day extravaganza, which culminates with the

crowning Sunday, is India's first international beauty contest. It has been marred by wide protests and a suicide.

Elsewhere in Bangalore, men and women protesters burned old tyres and screamed slogans against the pageant saying the contest was against Indian culture and an exercise in vulgarity, witnesses said.

Organisers Amitabh Bachchan Corp. Ltd. (ABCL), meanwhile, kept their fingers crossed as a drizzle dampened the southern city just hours before the grand finale.

The drizzle continued for more than an hour, washing the open-air Chinnaswamy Stadium, from where the contest will be broadcast live.

"It rained in the morning, but the sun has come out now," said Clea Executive Sudhakar.

Some 15,000 contest tickets have been sold, but the stadium does not have a canopy for the spectators.

ABCL has, however, covered the catwalk where the contestants will be presented.

"We hope there would be no rains during the bewitching hour when one girl's life will be transformed like Cinderella," added a worried ABCL official.

Departing space factory gives shuttle crew a scare

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — A prototype space factory, released from shuttle Columbia, gave astronauts a scare Friday as it passed close by the shuttle's cockpit.

The two-ton wake shield facility came a little closer for comfort as a gas-powered thruster propelled it away from the shuttle. The astronauts watched in radio silence as the saucer-shaped satellite sailed by.

"Now that my heart is a little bit out of my throat I can tell you a little bit about the separation," shuttle skipper Ken Cockrell said later, as the bright disc of the satellite receded in television views from the shuttle.

"We kept it in sight... at all times so we were assured of safe clearance, but I have to say the clearance was somewhere 10 feet or less going over the front windows and the left part of the nose," he said.

The wake shield was released from the mechanical clutches of Columbia's 15 metre-long robot arm at 8:38 p.m. est (2038 GMT) as the shuttle soared high above the Pacific Ocean.

Mission operations representative Jeff Bantle told a news conference that the five-member shuttle crew was never in any danger, as Cockrell could have taken evasive action if necessary.

"He's got the full capability of the orbiter... at his finger tips and... he could have moved away very quickly at any time," said Bantle.

"There's always adrenaline when two big bodies are moving close to each other

and I think... the crew monitored it very closely just to make sure that we were always safe."

The wake shield, making its third outing into space, is designed to manufacture ultra-pure semiconductors for use in high-speed computer chips. The stainless steel spacecraft could eventually lead to the first commercial space factories, its designers said.

As the wake shield travels through the tenuous upper atmosphere 218 miles (350 km) up, the 12-foot (3.6 metre) diameter disc will create a vacuum behind the craft nearly 100 times better than that possible on earth.

This near-perfect vacuum provides ideal conditions for the atom-by-atom manufacture of semiconductors, free of the contamination found in ground-based laboratories.

"It may make materials that are needed for high-performance computers, for wireless radio communications or cellular phones," Columbia astronaut Tom Jones said.

"All of these kinds of high performance chips that we need for our electronic information-age society might be able to be made more cheaply in space. The wake shield is a way to test that hypothesis."

The wake shield will fly about 56 kilometres behind Columbia for three days before the shuttle crew return Monday night to pick it up.

The University of Houston Space Vacuum Epitaxy Centre and Space Industries

Inc., which designed the wake shield, have made about \$5 million in improvements to solve the technical problems that plagued its first two test flights.

On the wake shield's maiden voyage in February 1994, problems with the attitude control system prevented its deployment and it remained on the end of the shuttle's robot arm.

The spacecraft was released into orbit on its second mission, in September 1995, but it suffered further attitude problems, and it's electronics overheated.

Despite the problems, the wake shield manufactured four of the seven planned semiconductor wafers. Project officials said the quality was far superior to ground-manufactured wafers.

The spacecraft's technical problems lingered Friday, delaying the deployment by about 30 minutes.

This mission will be a make-or-break test for the troubled project. NASA recently cancelled a fourth flight of the satellite to make room for another shuttle visit to Russia's Mir space station.

"We believe this is going to be a very successful flight this time around," Alex Ignatiev, director of the Space Vacuum Epitaxy Centre, said.

The wake shield is the second recoverable satellite to leave Columbia's payload bay this mission. A U.S.-German telescope, released from Columbia Tuesday night, trailed about 61 miles behind the shuttle.

Ousted Bhutto on train journey to rally support

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (R) — Ousted Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto began a train journey from Rawalpindi to Lahore Saturday to rally support against her dismissal on charges of corruption and misuse.

Witnesses said Ms. Bhutto's train pulled out of the main station at Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, as she waved to about 1,000 supporters waving green, black and white flags of her Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

"Long live Benazir, down with (President Farooq) Leghari," they chanted as Ms. Bhutto, wearing a pink sweater and a white headscarf above her traditional shalwar kameez (long shirt and trousers) boarded the Tezgam Express at 8 a.m. (0300 GMT).

Armed police were out in force at the station, with some posted on the rooftop, but there was no violence.

Many women were among the crowd, some of them in tears. "What is happening to this high-born daughter?" one said.

Some party workers gestured angrily at former cabinet ministers accompanying Ms. Bhutto and blamed them for her downfall.

Ms. Bhutto was due to address crowds at three stops along the 280-kilometre route to Lahore, capital of the populous province of Punjab and stronghold of her main political rival Nawaz Sharif, leader of the Pakistan Muslim League.

Ms. Bhutto, 43, is battling to overturn her Nov. 5 dismissal by her one-time close political associate President Farooq Leghari, who sacked her government three years into its five-year term for alleged abuses of power.

She has appealed to the supreme court to restore the National Assembly (lower house) dissolved by Mr. Leghari and reinstate her government immediately.

The court returned the first version of her petition this week, saying it con-



Ousted Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto waves to supporters at Rawalpindi Railways Station Saturday as she leaves on a trip to Lahore to rally support against her dismissal by President Farooq Leghari, who accused her government of corruption and incompetence. Armed police were out in force at the station, with some posted on the rooftop, but there was no violence (Reuters photo)

tained scandalous references to the president and supreme court chief justice. Her lawyers disputed this, but refuted the petition anyway, omitting the offending passages.

Ms. Bhutto has said she will await the court's verdict before deciding whether to fight the general election due to be held on Feb. 3 under the supervision of a caretaker government.

Ms. Bhutto has exchanged bitter words with Leghari, accusing him of breaking his word not to use controversial presidential powers to dismiss an elected gov-

ernment.

Mr. Leghari, Ms. Bhutto's nominee for president after she took power in October 1993, has said his former patron brought Pakistan to the brink of economic and social collapse, and was unable to distinguish between the state and the government.

The caretaker government, led by 80-year-old Miraj Khalid, has vowed to bring undisclosed charges against Ms. Bhutto and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, who has been detained under a broad maintenance of public order law since his wife's overthrow.

U.S. Air Force plane crashes off California

LOS ANGELES, California (AFP) — An U.S. air national guard C-130 Hercules plane with a crew of 11 crashed off the coast of northern California, with one survivor found and 10 missing, the U.S. Air Force confirmed Saturday.

"There was one survivor who has been taken to hospital and is in stable condition and talking and is going to be okay, it seems like," Colonel Rick Davis, commander of the 939th Rescue Wing in Portland, Oregon, told AFP.

An air force statement identified the airman as Sergeant Robert Vogel, 31, an airborne communications specialist from Albany, Oregon. He was listed in stable condition in a California hospital.

The service confirmed the 10 other airmen were listed as missing in the crash which happened late Friday.

The four-engine transport, assigned to the 304th Rescue Squadron of the 939th Rescue Wing in Portland, was on a routine training mission.

The plane, which was en route to San Diego, California from Portland, went down about 96 kilometres off the coast of Cape Mendocino, California.

Cape Mendocino is located roughly 320 kilometres north of San Francisco.

The air force said the crew had radioed that they were experiencing electrical problems and had shut down one engine.

Soon after 7:30 p.m. (0330 GMT Saturday) the air force reported control centres in Oakland, California and Seattle, Washington had lost radar and radio contact with the craft.

"They had an engine problem and an electrical problem ... you can only assume that that was one of the reasons they went down, but so far we just don't know and it would be speculation" on what caused the crash, Mr. Davis said.

The air force said the missing crew members' names were being withheld pending notification of family members.

Search operations involving two other C-130s and two helicopters were underway, U.S. Coast Guard patrol boats were on their way to the scene and the cause of the crash is under investigation.

Karabakh talks end without accord

HELSINKI (R) — Armenia and Azerbaijan have failed to reach consensus on steps to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and an OSCE summit in Lisbon next month will probably not come any closer to a solution, diplomats on both sides said.

An uneasy ceasefire has prevailed since May 1994 in Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave with an ethnic Armenian majority surrounded by Azeri territory.

Up to one million Azeri refugees have lived in tent camps since ethnic Armenians drove Azeris out of the enclave in a six-year war triggered by Nagorno-Karabakh's independence declaration in 1988. The fighting claimed over 10,000 lives.

Mediation talks here this week led by the 11-nation Minsk Group aimed at a resolution that could have been included in the final document of the Dec. 2-3 Lisbon Summit of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

"Despite intensive consultations ... consensus was not achieved on the proposed principles of the settlement," the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

Finland has co-chaired the Minsk Group with Russia since April 1995. The group, with Russia as permanent co-chair, has been mediating in the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute since 1992.

Both sides continued to blame each other for the failure to come to terms.

"We were targeting different issues ... There was no consensus," the leader of Armenia's delegation, Deputy Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanyan, told Reuters by telephone. "We wanted to talk about the political agreement. They wanted to tackle the issue of their territorial integrity."

Azeri Deputy Foreign Minister Tofik Zulfugarov told Reuters in an interview that territorial integrity lay at the heart of a proposal for an agreement presented by his country in Helsinki.

"Azerbaijan made a constructive proposal ... and our position was understood by the co-chairmen ... (and) by the other members of the Minsk Group," he said.

A draft decision tabled by Finland and Russia to serve as a base for a Minsk Group resolution to be presented at Lisbon was tailored along the lines of the Azeri proposal, Mr. Zulfugarov said.

But Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh rejected the draft.

"They (Armenia) don't have the political willingness to solve this problem," Mr. Zulfugarov said.

"The desire to have something that could be a breakthrough to present at the (Lisbon) summit was premature," Mr. Oskanyan said.

Now the Lisbon OSCE document's reference to Nagorno-Karabakh was likely to be "very watered-down, just a very general statement, if there will be any at all," he said.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a Western diplomat close to the talks said Armenia and Azerbaijan remained far apart on many key issues.

The OSCE summit would not be able to make much headway on Nagorno-Karabakh — a futile topic already at a summit in Helsinki in 1992 and again in Budapest in 1994 — until the Minsk Group finalised the political agreement, he said.

Armenia and Azerbaijan agree that a peacekeeping mission for Nagorno-Karabakh could receive a mandate only after the Minsk Group had come up with a political settlement.

In Helsinki, Azerbaijan reiterated its commitment to "autonomy" or "home rule" for Nagorno-Karabakh.

279 Haitian boat people land in Cuba

HAVANA (R) — A group of 279 Haitian boat people who were feared dead at sea had landed in eastern Cuba, official sources said Friday. One of the children on board, a 2-year-old girl, has since died.

Sources from the International Migration Office said the group, who set sail from Haiti on Nov. 2, landed near the eastern Cuban town of Mon four days later. There had been reports that they had perished at sea.

Cuban doctors tried in vain to save the life of a girl who

was suffering severe malnutrition and dehydration from the voyage, the sources said. The group, who travelled in a sailboat equipped with a motor, were being housed at a camp for Haitian boat people at Maisi in eastern Cuba, they said.

The sources said the group consisted of 196 men, 58 women and 25 children, including the girl who died. They said they were awaiting further details but communications between Havana and eastern Cuba had been ham-

pered by heavy rains.

Earlier Friday, a spokesman for the U.S. Coast Guard in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, said the boat might have landed safely in Cuba. Eyewitnesses told Reuters the Angel Gabriel, a wooden motorised sailboat, left the southern Haitian port city of Petit-Goave with 180 people or more. The exact numbers were not certain — some reports said close to 300 Haitians, among them many children, might have been on board.



Hutu refugees fled the fighting on Friday to search for a safe haven. (Reuters photo)

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at, Zane (AFP)

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Rwandan Hutu refugees register for food at Knamu, a village south of Gisenyi, after returning home from Zaire where they fled the fighting in eastern Zaire. Zairean rebels stopped U.N. agencies entering a large swathe of eastern Zaire Friday to search for thousands of lost people while efforts to despatch an intervention force to the region lagged still further (Reuters photo)

Diplomats, military mull options on Zaire's refugees

BUKAVU, Zaire (AFP) — Desperate Rwandan refugees defied the stranglehold of the feared Hutu militias to begin tramping home Saturday while the world haggled over how to help them at meetings in Geneva and Stuttgart.

An estimated half a million refugees have fled back to Rwanda in the past 10 days, but the plight of the estimated hundreds of thousands still scattered across eastern Zaire is believed to be more serious, many having been on the move for the past month.

In Stuttgart, representatives of some 40 countries and organizations have differed widely on the number of refugees still needing aid from a putative international military force.

Talks in the German city were likely to continue until Sunday at least, said a spokesman for Canada, which is to lead the military force.

Participants have differed widely on the number of refugees in need, variously being put at between 100,000 and 500,000, according to the designated commander of the proposed force, Canada's Lieutenant-General Maurice Baril.

Gen. Baril said he believed a military intervention was still necessary but that the estimated number of refugees and their needs had to form the basis of such a decision.

He had therefore established a group within the meeting to assess these. The Canadian spokesman said the meeting was now divided into working groups.

No list of the participants has been issued, but representatives of Britain, France, Russia, Senegal and the United States were among those present at the opening, along with the Canadian organizers and several U.N. agencies.

Zaire and Rwanda were not represented.

Meanwhile, in Geneva, diplomats and aid agency representatives met to discuss the resettlement of half a million Rwandan refugees who have returned home from Zaire in the past week.

The meeting focused on how to facilitate the re-integration of refugees back home. The talks were to only briefly touch upon the problem of the refugees left behind in eastern Zaire.

The picture of growing disenchantment with the militia fits in with aid agency reports, despite orders by the Interahamwe for all refugees to flee into the hills and forests of eastern Zaire with them.

The Interahamwe is blamed for much of the genocide that engulfed Rwanda in 1994, when more than 500,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered in an orgy of bloodshed.

When the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front seized power, the Hutu militia fled along with two million refugees. But it used refugee camps in neighbouring Zaire as rear bases from which to launch guerrilla attacks in Rwanda.

One group of refugees 100 kilometres north of here said they had spent four days in the mountains before deciding to turn around and go home.

"We had to hide," John Damascene said, recounting how his group evaded the reach of the militia. "There was nowhere to go."

"This is our only hope, this is our only way to be safe. We have nothing to eat and no medicine. We just want to go home to Rwanda."

His group of 70 refugees had already trudged north from camps all along the tortuous road north from Bukavu ahead of fighting between rebel Tutsis and Zairean government forces.

Many people had died of hunger and disease, he said, and after living a hand to mouth existence for so long, they decided enough was enough.

However the vast bulk of the estimated 200,000 refugees who had marched north followed Interahamwe orders to go into the mountains.

Lionel Rosenblatt, head of U.S. aid agency Refugees International, said a woman who wanted to go back had been forced to watch as the militia shot dead three of her four children. Only then did they allow her to leave their group with her surviving child.

However he added, "the Interahamwe control of certain camps, seems to be breaking down in some cases."

In Washington, U.S. officials are watching the chaotic flow of refugees in Zaire "day by day" as they consider a mission to aid the central African country, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake said.

Asked when Washington would decide whether to join a possible multinational humanitarian mission to the embattled region, Mr. Lake said, "I don't want to predict that."

"We look at it day by day, and thus far every day we have seen movements that are encouraging," he said.

"This is a very difficult issue."

Belarus peace accord collapses after 24 hours

MINSK (R) — A Russian-brokered deal to defuse the conflict between Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko and his parliament collapsed in less than 24 hours Saturday after legislators failed to approve it.

Mr. Lukashenko, speaking on television, announced he was withdrawing from his side of the deal and said a controversial referendum Sunday on increasing his powers would be mandatory.

The deal's collapse was a serious loss of face for Russia whose Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin brokered it in all-night talks between Thursday and Friday.

Mr. Lukashenko had agreed that the referendum should only be consultative while his opposition promised to withdraw an attempt to remove him from

office.

"The referendum will have a mandatory character. I declare this directly since the parliament nor the constitutional court has fulfilled the obligations which they took on," Mr. Lukashenko said, ruling out any further attempts at compromise.

He said parliament's failure to pass the deal showed disrespect to all the other parties involved, including the Russian leadership, which hailed the accord as a great success for its diplomacy and for the "community" it formed with Belarus last April.

Deputy Parliament Speaker Gennady Karpenko said he had not seen Mr. Lukashenko's early morning broadcast but commented: "We have a Constitutional Court decision that the referendum should be consultative."

Parliament in a series of votes late Friday defied pressure from Mr. Lukashenko, who came twice to the chamber, and failed to muster even a simple majority of the 199 members in favour of the deal, which many deputies saw as tilted in the president's favour.

Mr. Lukashenko wants to use the referendum to tighten his grip on rival institutions and extend his term by more than two years — an idea fiercely opposed by parliament. The constitutional court has repeatedly ruled that Mr. Lukashenko has exceeded his powers.

Parliament has adjourned until Tuesday. But it now faces the risk that Mr. Lukashenko will either ignore it altogether or order it dissolved if voters, as expected, approve his constitutional draft.

The row has many paral-

els with the crisis which paralysed politics in Russia for most of 1993 and ended in bloodshed when President Boris Yeltsin put down an armed revolt led by his parliamentary opponents.

Mr. Lukashenko, parliament Chairman Semyon Sharshinsky and Mr. Chernomyrdin signed an agreement at dawn Friday after all-night talks to defuse the conflict.

Under the Russian deal, the future of the constitution would be handed over to a commission composed of 50 members from parliament and 50 named by Mr. Lukashenko in effect giving the president a built-in majority because some deputies are on his side.

Western officials and his opponents have observed serious flaws in early voting which began almost two weeks ago on Nov. 9.

Suu Kyi addresses supporters away from her house

RANGOON (AFP) — Burma opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi Saturday defied a government blockade around her house and spoke to pro-democrat supporters on a street about one kilometre away.

She addressed a gathering of about 500 supporters for five minutes, departing in her white limousine before four truckloads of riot police had arrived on the scene. The crowds dispersed without incident.

"We are not here to create unrest. The reason for our being here is to show unity and solidarity with the people," she had told supporters.

Two weeks ago, a mob of 200 men attacked her motorcade with stones and sticks, as the Nobel Peace laureate tried to drive out to address the crowds, who have been prevented for the past two months from gathering in front of her Rangoon residential compound to hear her speak.

"We will continue to do what needs to be done in order to reach our desired goal," said Ms. Suu Kyi.

"In doing so we shall be guided by compassion and not by anger."

We bear no malice towards anyone," she said, before urging the gathering to disperse in a "peaceful and orderly manner."

She was accompanied by Aung Shwe, the chairman of her National League for Democracy (NLD), which swept the last general elections to be held in Burma, six years ago, the results of which were never ratified by the ruling military junta.

Also present were the co-vice chairmen of the NLD, Kyi Maung and Tin Oo.

Tin Oo had been injured by flying glass during the motorcade attack on Nov. 9, which the NLD believes to have been executed by a government-sponsored mass organisation.

Authorities had resumed the blockade manned by traffic police about 200 metres either side of Ms. Suu Kyi's house on University Avenue early Saturday.

Apparently resigned to the obstruction to her weekend addresses, which had been a regular weekend event attended by thousands since her release from house arrest last July, supporters now gathered at an intersection to the east of her house.

The pro-democrat leader was greeted with applause and shouts of "long live Aung San Suu Kyi," as she arrived.

"It was quite unexpected but we're so happy she came out," said one supporter who requested anonymity.

Sinn Fein official says new IRA truce is within reach

LONDON (R) — A senior Irish Republican leader was quoted early Saturday as saying he believed another Irish Republican Army ceasefire in its campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland was within reach.

Martin McGuinness, chief strategist for Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, said in an interview with the BBC that there could be another truce if British Prime Minister John Major accepted plans put forward this week by John Hume, leader of the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

Mr. McGuinness, commenting on the eve of a Sinn Fein conference in County Meath in the Irish Republic, said a way forward was possible.

"If we can achieve all that we have identified, which we believe is very reasonable indeed, then we are prepared to do that again," he said in the interview, quoted by the British news agency Press Association.

"I think there would be considerable hope that we could manage to succeed a second time around. But it will be much more difficult, of course, because of the

very great distrust which exists between the British government and the IRA," he added.

The outlawed IRA, the main guerrilla force fighting British rule in Northern Ireland, declared a truce in September 1994, but abandoned it in February this year with bomb attacks in England and two at military bases in Germany and Northern Ireland.

Mr. McGuinness also attacked a Republican splinter group, the Irish Continuity Army Council, which claimed responsibility for planting a huge bomb outside police headquarters in a heavily populated part of the Northern Irish city of Londonderry Thursday.

The bomb was safely defused, but the incident threatened to disrupt Northern Ireland's faltering peace process.

The hawkish Irish Continuity Army Council emerged after the IRA's 1994 truce.

Speaking after the Londonderry bomb was made safe, Mr. Hume said he believed the IRA was ready to renew the ceasefire if Britain agreed to proposals he had put forward.

Media reports said Mr.

Hume had urged Britain to set a rigid timetable for the all-party peace talks on the future of Northern Ireland.

In exchange, the IRA would call a new truce so that Sinn Fein could be granted a seat at the talks table.

Britain and Ireland have said that Sinn Fein will not be allowed into talks until the IRA declares a full ceasefire.

Sinn Fein says it wants an unconditional seat at the talks if the IRA does adopt a new truce in its war to end British rule of Northern Ireland.

Pro-British, "Loyalist" politicians have been allowed into the talks because their guerrilla allies are still honouring ceasefires they called two years ago to match the IRA's now defunct one.

Mr. Hume has been holding talks with Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams and with British and Irish leaders to try to get a new IRA ceasefire and to breathe new life into the peace process.

Britain and Sinn Fein have both denied an Irish newspaper report suggesting that the IRA was operating an unofficial ceasefire to get Sinn Fein into the talks.

Asian ports told to be on alert for hijacked ship

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Port authorities throughout Asia were told to be on the lookout Saturday for a gasoil tanker hijacked off Singapore by pirates who set members of the ship's crew adrift at sea.

The warning came from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), a maritime crime watchdog, and went to all ports in Asia to look for the Malaysian-registered ship hijacked last Tuesday.

"We have asked every port authority in this (Asian) region to look for it (the ship)," said John Martin, regional manager at the IMB's office in Kuala Lumpur.

He said no further information was yet available about the ship's location.

Six pirates hijacked the

tanker and set adrift 15 of the ship's 17 crew in a lifeboat, IMB said in London.

But the crime came to light only after the crew were rescued by a fishing vessel, which put into port on the island of Batam, 50 miles (80 km) south of Singapore, Friday.

The vessel, Suci, and its \$600,000 cargo of gasoil were stolen about 60 miles off the east coast of Singapore while heading for Sandakan Port in Malaysia's Borneo Island state of Sabah, IMB said.

"The ship was going to Sabah, so it has at least that much fuel. That gives them a very wide radius," Mr. Martin said.

He said IMB was concerned about the safety of the two Indonesian crew members, the second and

fourth engineers of the ship, who have been detained aboard the vessel by the pirates.

The ship's manager, Maritime Agency Pvt Ltd in Singapore, said the pirates may be sailing to a south-east Asian port to sell the cargo.

"We suspect she may call on a port in Thailand, Indonesia or south China, where it may be easier to get rid of the cargo," Ken Char of Maritime Agency said.

"They could also go for high-seas bunkering," he added.

He said the ship, built in 1979, was a 4,872 dead-weight tonne tanker, which normally carried vegetable oil.

It was owned by Malaysia's Rezan Holdings Bhd.

Hundreds mourn Kennedy 33 years on

DALLAS (R) — Hundreds of people, many of them touting dark conspiracy theories, gathered to honour former President John F. Kennedy Friday, 33 years after he was cut down by an assassin's bullet.

In what has become an annual ritual, about 500 people stood in downtown Dallas on the infamous Grassy Knoll — from where many people believe Kennedy's true, unidentified killer fired the fatal shot — and observed a moment of silence at 12:30 p.m. (1:30 p.m. edt) (1730 GMT), the time of the assassination.

Wreaths of flowers were placed at the site along with a huge photograph of the charismatic Kennedy and his glamorous wife Jacqueline. Above the photo of the smiling

couple, taken on the day of the assassination, a sign read: "We do remember."

Kennedy was murdered on Nov. 22, 1963, as he was driven in an open-top limousine through Dealey Plaza in Dallas. The official Warren Commission, chaired by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren, concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone when he killed Kennedy with rifle fire from a sixth floor window of the Texas school book depository.

But the commission report has been widely criticised and many historians, including some who believe Oswald was the lone killer, say key questions about the assassination remain unanswered.

Seoul to send home rescued North Korean sailor

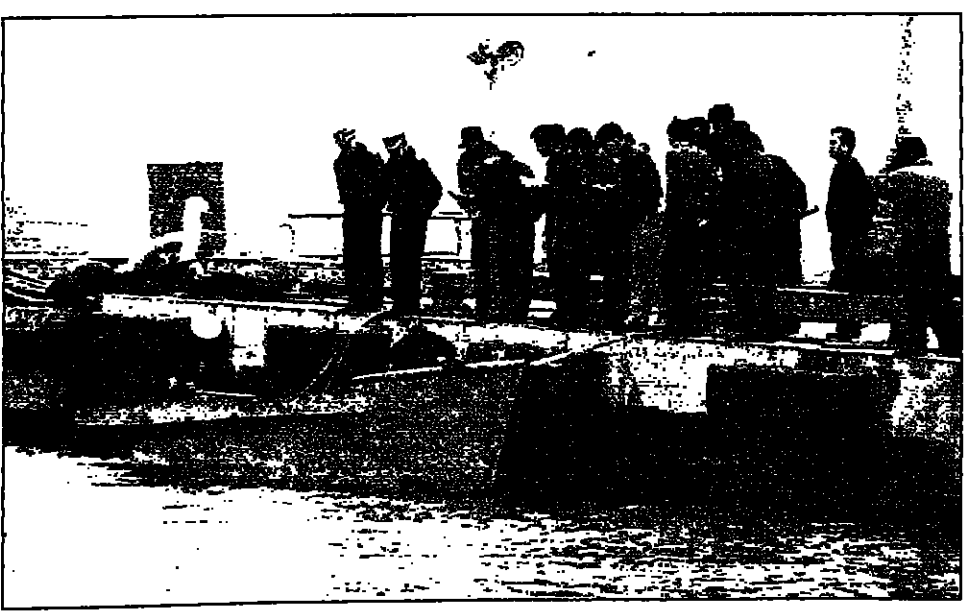
SEOUL (R) — South Korea will send home a North Korean sailor rescued while drifting off a southern island, the Seoul Defence Ministry said Saturday.

It is the first goodwill gesture by South Korea towards the North since relations between the two Koreas turned icy after a North Korean submarine landed 26 agents on a South Korean beach in September.

A defence ministry statement said the North Korean sailor, identified as Chung Kwang-Son of the Stalinist state's navy, was picked up by a South Korean maritime police vessel and taken to the western port city of Incheon Saturday.

"Our government plans to return the rescued North Korean sailor shortly through the military armistice commission on humanitarian grounds and in accordance with his own free will," the statement said.

The commission oversees a truce signed in 1953 at the end of three-year Korean war.



South Korean Navy soldiers investigate a North Korean boat Saturday which was drifting off a South Korean island Friday with a North Korean man on board off the west coast city Incheon. Tense relations between the two Koreas have worsened since a North Korean submarine landed 26 agents on a South Korean beach in September. Twenty-four of them were shot dead, one was captured alive and another is still at large (Reuters photo)

kill himself with an axe he was holding when he was asked to get on board our vessel but he later requested his rescue after repeated persuasion," he said.

The decision to send Mr. Chung back home came one day before South Korean President Kim Young-Sam is due to meet U.S. President Bill Clinton to discuss the September submarine incursion by North Korea.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Kim are attending the Asia-Pacific economic cooperation forum in the Philip-pines.

Seoul officials have said Mr. Kim will seek a tough

U.S. stand against North Korea until Pyongyang apologised for the submarine incursion which has raised tensions on the Korean peninsula.

Of the 26 North Korean agents from the submarine, 24 were shot dead, one was captured alive and another is still at large.

The North insists the incident was an accident and demands the return of the bodies and the captured agent.

South Korea says it will resume assistance to the North only after Pyongyang guarantees it will not stage

another incident such as the submarine intrusion.

Seoul recently delayed sending technicians to do site preparation for building nuclear reactors in the North, which were promised under a 1994 U.S.-North Korean deal that halted a suspected nuclear arms programme by Pyongyang.

Pyongyang has since threatened to end its nuclear freeze.

On Friday, South Korean Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-Ha met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Manila and agreed to preserve the 1994 nuclear agreement.

and security: it carries with it an indispensable legitimacy. But rhetoric and ideals are not enough. If we want the United Nations to continue its key role in peacekeeping, we must help improve its capacity in managing, planning and mounting operations. This needs the commitment and participation of all nations.

The writers are the foreign ministers of Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark. This article is reprinted from

U.K. schools lead the world in computer literacy

By Violet Johnstone

BRITAIN IS the world leader in the ownership of home computers. Almost one in three (31.8 per cent) of the nation's 23.6 million households owns a computer, compared to 31 per cent in Holland, in second place, and 15 per cent in the United States.

The U.K. also leads the world in the provision of information technology (IT) in schools, according to a recent study by Research Machines on international comparisons on IT in schools.

Picture the scene: roughly 7.5 million computers in homes and schools around the country used for pleasure, education and business and now eating significantly into time previously spent watching television and videos.

Why has Britain become the world leader? One chief reason is the large number of computer literate children who, having been taught and given the taste for computers at school, bugger their parents to have one at home.

In the early 1980s the government financed a computer for every secondary school (while the BBC invited tenders for the construction of a state-of-the-art computer to spearhead Britain's technological advance). By 1992, in England the average number of pupils per computer in primary schools was 25, and in secondary schools 13. In 1995, this had improved to 19 and 10 respectively.

Now political parties, British Telecom and most of the cable companies are striving to provide schools with cut price computers and access to the Internet. Young people's thirst for computers has become unstoppable and as a result, ownership is highest among households with children, at almost 45 per cent, up from less than 30 per cent in 1990.

Most parents see the computer as a valuable educational tool, especially as new

software utilising CD-ROM can provide videos and speech which increases user (child) interest. Some computer games are overtly educational and with multi-media computers a student can access on-line services and "visit" the world's museums and art galleries, or review and download research from libraries and other information sources. There is a growing library of CD-ROM educational software from foreign language courses to audio-visual encyclopaedias.

Working from home

Another reason for Britain's lead is that there are more people working from home in the U.K. than in any other country in Europe — either as self-employed or employed workers. Almost one in five of the adult male workforce in the U.K. is now self-employed and more and more are choosing to work from home. Up to one million home workers use a computer, usually with a modem for external communications.

They are part of a growing band of wage-earners who are taking full advantage of modern technology and whose numbers are expected to increase dramatically in the next ten years.

There is almost no office task that cannot be carried out in the home office, and employers have been quick to recognise the benefits of relocating staff to their own homes which can be fully-equipped at a fraction of the cost of installing and maintaining a traditional office complex.

Computer skills are by no means a male preserve. A nationwide survey revealed that more than half the people taking part-time computer courses for beginners were women: 46 per cent of those owned their own computers, and of the remainder, 81 per cent intended to buy one within 12 months.



Government funding in schools has given children an unstoppable thirst for computers at home. The most frequent users are teenagers who can use their computers up to 200 hours a week for educational purposes and game playing

We have come a long way since Sir Clive Sinclair, the father of home computers, launched the first affordable consumer computer in 1980 costing less than £100. Its revolutionary breakthrough was in its price and the fact that it connected to the television which became the monitor. Since then, the

home computer market has not looked back.

Home computers have become more compact, more user-friendly and, above all, cheaper. On average, just over half a million home computers were bought each year in 1992 and 1993, and this almost doubled in 1994 in the U.K. Figures for 1995

are likely to show a record year because more models were available and prices continued to tumble because of intense competition in the market place.

There has been a major improvement in the hardware available and a phenomenal growth in software. Computers are no longer high-tech-

nology tools, but versatile, fun machines offering complete educational, business, communications and entertainment packages. Within seconds of switching on at home, you can be playing a visually exciting and mentally challenging game, be connected to an on-line service and be checking share prices.

choosing a holiday or researching a school or college project, or via the television be editing your holiday video.

The potential of the home computer in the future is indeed exciting. It will be possible to programme your utility computer so that it wakes you up at the right

time with your bath already run to the required level and at the right temperature. And, while you are bathing, it will make your coffee just as you like it.

Will any home be without a computer in years to come?

London Press Service

Cigar craze sparks stogie smuggling from Cuba

By John Pacenti
The Associated Press

MIAMI BEACH, Florida — On South Beach, where would-be models toil as bartenders, tourists go topless and drag queens stroll past neon-lit hotels, the ultra-rich have a new indulgence: the illegal Cuban cigar.

The cigar craze of the 1990s has given smugglers something besides drugs and counterfeit cash to sneak into the United States.

They have been caught bringing illegal cigars into Florida and States as far from Cuba as Arizona and Washington.

Not surprisingly, with so many smokers yearning to be cool, plenty of bogus Cuban stogies are also turning up.

"It's the forbidden fruit," said Michael Sheehan, spokesman for the U.S. Customs Office. "Cigars have become tremendously popular, and Cuban cigars are legendary for their quality. You have a natural supply and demand."

Mr. Sheehan picks up two yellow-and-black labeled Cuban Cohibas he keeps on his desk and crinkles them between thumb and forefinger.

"Props," he assures.

Cuban cigars have been illegal in the United States since 1962 when the federal government imposed a trade embargo to try to thwart the communist leadership of Fidel Castro. Serious violations can bring fines of as much as \$250,000 for individuals and up to 10 years in prison.

The illegal cigar trade has boomed this year. A

premium Cuban cigar such as a Cohiba or Montecristo can fetch up to \$25.

Invariably, the first question a novice asks in a Miami cigar store is, "where are the Cubans?"

"You would be surprised how people don't know about the embargo," said Sabine Swindal, manager of the Caribbean Cigar Factory on South Beach. "Or people assume you have Cuban cigars stashed that you keep for your special customers, but of course we don't."

Caribbean cigar has ridden the cigar-puffing trend to handsome profits. Cranking out cigars from its workshop in the little Havana section of Miami, it first offered stock to the public this summer and watched its value shoot from \$7 to more than \$11 that first day.

increase of 30.6 per cent, and the Cigar Association of America says premium sales in the first five months of 1996 were up 51 per cent.

Customs agents realised demand for illegal Cuban smokes was growing when Anthony Richard Sperandio, 58, was caught with 2,700 cigars in the Florida Keys in August 1995. He reportedly told authorities he and a cohort had bought the cigars in Cuba for \$3,600 and figured to net more than \$28,000.

In the past, most cigar contraband was seized from travelers returning from legal, political or humanitarian trips to Cuba and exceeding the allowed limit of \$100 in Cuban merchandise, including cigars.

"We used to just have people ... Having a few too many cigars with

surge of popularity in cigars."

But Mr. Sheehan also puzzles over the smugglers' smarts.

"Why should you go to that significant risk when you can stay right here in the U.S., go down to the local grocery store and buy inexpensive cigars, unwrap them and print one of your own bands that looks like a Cohiba?" Mr. Sheehan asked.

"It's a big problem, counterfeit cigars," said Sandrine Stratford, a manager at South Beach News and Tobacco. "A lot of people smoke Cubans. They want a Cohiba, even if it's fake. They want to be seen at the club with the Cohiba ring on their cigars."

Cuba's cigars have always been known as the best smokes. Miami tobacco merchants allude to the mystique, naming their businesses with such monikers as Havana Ray's and La Gloria Cubana.

"They are the best in the world," said Ina Gujyte, Havana Ray's manager in Coconut Grove. "There is nothing like a Cuban cigar. The ones I've tried are delicious."

Premium cigars sold legally in the United States use tobacco from the Caribbean, mostly the Dominican Republic (Davidoff's) or Jamaica (Macanudo). The best wrapper leaves, oddly, are grown in Connecticut.

Ms. Gujyte says these products fall short because Cuba has unique soil and climate — and tradition. As she declared: "The French know wines and the Cubans know cigars."

"Cigars have become tremendously popular, and Cuban cigars are legendary for their quality. You have a natural supply and demand."

In 1995, nationwide sales of all cigars increased 9.9 per cent, following a 9.3 per cent increase the year before. That year, smokers bought 170 million premium cigars, a whopping

them, but now we are seeing more and more the large commercial operations," Mr. Sheehan said. "It appears the smuggling efforts are increasing and we generally think that is because of the recent

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Jordan plans tight rein on government spending

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan plans to keep a tight rein on government spending in 1997 to bolster its economic reforms, raising expenditure just five per cent to JD1.86 billion (\$2.63 billion), Finance Minister Marwan Awad told Reuters.

Mr. Awad said next year's state expenditure compared with an adjusted 1996 figure of JD1.764 billion, two per cent than envisaged at the start of the year.

"The size of the budget (expenditure) of 1997 is 1.86 billion dinars," he said.

Mr. Awad declined to say how much the budget deficit would be next year, but said it would be within targets set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The IMF has said the budget deficit should be cut in 1997 to 3.1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) from a targeted 4.1

per cent in the 1996 budget. GDP itself has been growing by around six per cent annually over the last four years.

Officials have said the 1996 deficit is not expected to exceed JD200 million. This does not factor in foreign assistance which traditionally covers budget shortfalls.

Officials have said the draft 1997 budget, which has yet to be approved by cabinet, is expected to benefit from windfall revenues from the long-awaited start of Jordan's privatisation programme, and a fall in world wheat prices since August.

They said a tight rein on public spending will be maintained by a freeze in hiring for public sector jobs. Salaries of over 450,000 strong civil service and pensions allocations are a major portion of overall state expenditure.

The tight 1997 budget constraints put in place are

critical to the final two years of an accelerated IMF reform programme ending late 1998 to further liberalise Jordan's economy and integrate it with global markets.

Officials say defence allocations are the main rise in otherwise constant 1997 state expenditure.

Domestic tax revenue is expected to increase, officials say, but overall tax income in relation to GDP is expected to fall slightly as Jordan dismantles tariffs under a trade liberalisation policy.

Government revenue will also be boosted for the first time by proceeds of state sell-offs in Jordan cement and the profitable state telecommunications company, reflecting stepped-up privatisation.

Mr. Awad's downward revision in 1996 spending contrasts with latest IMF figures which put the 1996 budget deficit at JD187 million (\$264 million), 15 per

cent above the JD163 million estimated when it was presented at start of the year.

Record world wheat prices that sent Jordan's import bill soaring in the first half of the year threatened to derail the projected 1996 deficit.

Savings from a steep bread price hike in August that ended subsidies — sparking the worst civil unrest since riots in 1989 — and a softening in world grain prices since then have helped to considerably cut costs.

But the government has still had to adjust down a 6.5-7.0 per cent GDP growth forecast for 1996 to 6.00 per cent as a result of the higher food subsidy bill.

Officials say an IMF-set target to nearly halve Jordan's overall budget deficit to 2.5 per cent of GDP in 1998 from 5.1 per cent in 1995 will get extra donor support during the 1997-1998 reform phase.

EU raises wheat subsidy in test of pledge to U.S.

PARIS (R) — The European Union (EU) moved closer to a new row over wheat with Washington by appearing to let its growers undercut U.S. prices for the first time in months and farmers raised fears of a global grain war.

Meeting in Brussels under heavy industry pressure to counter unstable foreign wheat prices, EU officials said they had agreed to a slight increase in export subsidies to help the world's second biggest producing area tackle competition.

Subsidies went up by about \$1 a tonne to about \$22, allowing farmers to sell wheat grown for \$180 a tonne to developing countries for less than \$160 without making a loss.

But in a break with weeks of shadow-boxing between the EU and Washington over prices, analysts said the new subsidies allowed European farmers to undercut U.S.

wheat costs. U.S. farmers are just about alone in seeing their wheat prices hold stable — and even rise slightly this week — because harvests there have been relatively disappointing.

That means that the EU would have had to cut subsidies this week to keep prices in line with the United States, analysts said. Subsidies close the gap between generally higher prices in Europe and lower prices in the United States and elsewhere.

"I am surprised they did this. The EU is under a lot of pressure from Washington to hold the line on prices," said an analyst in Geneva where most of the grain business operates.

U.S. soft red winter wheat prices were about \$5 a tonne against the type of wheat Brussels uses as a

benchmark. Despite efforts to ease past tensions, wheat remains one of the toughest areas for Brussels and Washington to agree on.

The EU drew Washington's wrath in September for reviving wheat export subsidies that once provoked bitter trade clashes between the world's food superpowers.

Both sides abandoned the costly handouts when wheat prices started a record-breaking streak last year. But the EU says subsidies are needed again now that world prices have collapsed beneath \$200 a tonne from a peak of nearly \$300 seen in April.

To placate U.S. critics who want the Clinton administration to fight subsidies with subsidies, Brussels has repeatedly pledged not to sell its wheat for less than U.S. growers can get on the world market without any government aid.

European officials were quick to play down the effects of the decision, saying it was meant to correct short-term imbalances and would not leave U.S. farmers at a disadvantage in the new year when competition is expected to be intense.

One official said there had been no policy change. But traders sensed victory in a decision they hailed as the reversal of an ill-judged experiment. Many had blamed the practice of tracking tight U.S. wheat markets for losing them business to cheaper supplies from Argentina and elsewhere.

"If this continues we are going to see our markets pinched by Argentina, Australia and Canada," veteran trader Jean-Pierre Dresti of French firm Soufflet said.

There was no immediate U.S. reaction but Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said last week he had not ruled out bringing back U.S. subsidies to counter EU trade practices.

The growing fight for wheat sales is good news for exporters just months after grain was being treated like gold.

Official figures show Syrian gross national product up by nearly 20%

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrian gross national product (GNP) rose by nearly 20 per cent in 1995 to 591.1 billion Syrian pounds (\$13.7 billion) compared with the previous year, according to figures published in the official press.

The figures showed GNP had risen by 95.4 billion pounds from the 1994 level of 496.5 billion pounds — \$11.5 billion at the official exchange rate of 43.5 Syrian pounds to the dollar.

No figure was given for the rate of inflation. Industrial production rose from 35.1 to 41 billion

pounds over the same period, while exports rose 11.8 per cent and imports fell 13.86 per cent — leading the trade balance to fall from 21.5 billion pounds in 1994 to 8.3 billion last year.

Exports in 1995 came to 44.5 billion pounds, while imports were 52.8 billion.

Syria, which has been self-sufficient in wheat since 1992, exported 200,000 tonnes of wheat in 1995 for the first time as production matched record levels of four million tonnes.

Cotton production also reached record levels of 557,000 tonnes in 1995

and is expected to reach 670,000 tonnes in 1996.

A harvest of 637,000 tonnes of olives is also being predicted for 1996, compared with 435,000 tonnes in 1995.

Syria also produced 570,000 tonnes of plums in 1995, and started exporting the fruit for the first time.

The figures also showed that the total amount of irrigated land in Syria reached 1.2 million hectares (around three million acres) in 1996 — around double the amount in 1970.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLS	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5070	0.5951	1.2705	111.45	1.3394	1505.00	1.6905	5.1125
DE Mark	0.6636	1.0000	0.3944	0.8428	73.95	0.8882	938.01	1.1215	3.3818
GB Sterling	1.6805	2.5315	1.0000	2.2789	187.30	2.2509	2529.15	2.8409	8.5916
CH Franc	0.7871	1.1857	0.4678	1.0000	87.72	1.0538	1184.11	1.3285	4.0224
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3510	0.5331	1.1390	1.0000	1.2007	13.49	151.55	4.5831
CA Dollar	0.7486	1.1181	0.4455	0.9435	1.20	1.0000	1125.68	1.2531	3.7895
IT Lira	0.0007	1.0008	0.3950	0.8844	1351.90	0.8895	1.0000	11.23	3.3953
NL Guilder	0.5815	0.8912	0.3517	0.7514	66.90	0.7921	890.01	1.0000	3.0234
FR Franc	0.1956	0.2947	0.1163	0.2441	21.78	0.2619	33.05	33.0500	1.0000

Energy		Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	23.75	23.70		
WTI	24.10	23.85		
Bony	23.75	23.70		
Dubai	21.25	20.60		
UL Gas	217.00	214.00		

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4021	0.1587	0.3389	28.7442
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4109	0.1620	0.3406	30.3721
KW Dinar	3.3587	5.0673	1.9961	4.2643	374.392
BR Dinar	0.0000	3.9772	1.5707	3.5631	295.683
CY Pound	2.1773	3.2812	1.2945	2.7683	242.66

Metal Prices			Period	1	2	3	4	5	6
Metal	Bid	Offer	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month
Gold (oz's)	376.35	376.85	USD	5.25	5.38	5.44	5.48	5.50	
Silver (oz's)	4.85	4.87	GBP	6.00	6.37	6.56	6.75	6.81	
Platinum (oz's)	382.55	383.55	JPY	0.37	0.36	0.41	0.45	0.50	
AL (3 Months)	1525	1526	DEM	3.00	3.06	3.12	3.13	3.16	
CU (3 Months)	2193	2198	FRF	3.30	3.37	3.43	3.48	3.54	
Zinc (3 Months)	1078	1082	CHF	1.65	1.68	1.93	1.93	1.98	
Lead (3 Months)	708	711	ITL	7.13	6.90	6.72	6.54	6.43	
NI (3 Months)	6820	6810							

Currency Deposit Rates (BIL)									
Cncy	Month	3	6	9	12	18	24	36	48
USD	5.25	5.38	5.44	5.48	5.50				
GBP	6.00	6.37	6.56	6.75	6.81				
JPY	0.37	0.36	0.41	0.45	0.50				
DEM	3.00	3.06	3.12	3.13	3.16				
FRF	3.30	3.37	3.43	3.48	3.54				
CHF	1.65	1.68	1.93	1.93	1.98				
ITL	7.13	6.90	6.72	6.54	6.43				

Main Equity Indices					
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High
New York	DOW JONES	6471.76	53.28	0.83	6471.76
New York	S&P 500	748.73	5.98	0.81	748.73
London	FT-SE 100	4018.7	84.9	1.54	4018.7
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	21216.11	72.77	0.34	21216.11
Paris	CAC 40	2255.47	21.9	0.98	2255.47
Frankfurt	DAX	2763.69	-8.65	-0.31	2764.88

Energy				* JOD Cross Rates			
Commodity	Last	Delivery		Currency	Buy	Sell	
Coffee (c/lbs)	115.83	Spot		US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
Cocoa (5/ton)	1394	Spot		GB Sterling	1.1885	1.1944	
Sugar (5/ton)	308.5	Spot		DE Mark	0.469	0.4713	
Wheat (5/ton)	127	Spot		CH Franc	0.5567	0.5595	
Soya (c/lbs)	22.38	Spot		FR Franc	0.1303	0.139	
Tes (sp/kg)	118	Spot		JP Yen	0.6343	0.6375	
Barley (5/bsh)	224	Spot		NL Guilder	0.4183	0.4204	
Rice (5/ton)	470	Spot		IT Lira	0.4899	0.4722	

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword by Harvey Chew

ACROSS

- Traffic sign
- Figure on a tag
- Film canine
- Novel plantation
- High esteem
- Lake, high up
- Peron and Gabor
- Scout rank
- Potpouri
- CA saline lake
- Dvorak
- Uproariously funny one
- Behold: Lat.
- Incantation
- Yielded
- Hazardous contests
- Crucial factor
- Hail, to Antony
- Elec. units
- Fretted
- Ugly duckling
- Atlas item
- Temptress
- Burmese statesman, U—
- 40 Royal wands
- 42 Caris
- 43 Curb
- 44 Appear
- 45 More docile
- 47 Pizza topping
- 52 Surrounded by
- 53 Scarlett
- 54 Pindar output
- 55 Glass section
- 56 Break up
- 57 Monk's room
- 58 Italian city
- 59 Lovable
- 60 Money

DOWN

- Holy women
- Mauna Loa
- Spoken
- Spendthrifts
- Resin
- Ridicule
- harshly
- *Picnic author
- Fizzy drink
- Poetic
- palindrome
- Immediately
- Kept in reserve
- Peter, Paul and Mary
- Of unknown authorship: abbr.
- Lubricates
- Auditor, at times: abbr.
- Cardinal
- Slaughter
- Tanner's bark
- Certain
- Quoties
- Dutch or microwave
- Actor Maurice
- Fender flaw
- Hoover and Aswan
- Murmur from
- Garfield
- Legal claim
- Plant with compound leaves
- Julia Child
- Roof edge
- Hold at bay
- Southern river
- Go
- Toot
- Record
- Amo. —
- Boy, it's hot!
- Music halls
- Gwyn or Canter
- Capri or Man
- Former govt. gp.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Forget that difficulty which has been annoying you for some time and go after something which will bring pleasure to you and your loved ones. Later this evening make the effort to consult with a bigwig on a project.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A stubborn fellow associate could cause you difficulty today so get busy at your career activities and avoid a disagreement which could develop. Later this evening you can meet with knowledgeable people and develop a plan of action.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Plan just how to get into valuable and worthwhile new activities today and drop that long-time difficulty which has been blocking your success. Later this evening you can seek out the advice of fellow associates for new tasks.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Study how to keep the promises you have made today and take the right action without wavering so that your reputation remains intact. Tonight you can relax at home with your loved ones and recuperate.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get in touch with outside fellow associates and make every effort to proceed at a quick pace with your career activities.

Your home plans may not work out as you had planned, however, don't feel discouraged. **VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Try a new system today which can improve your skills at your career activities and thereby make your efforts more productive. Cement better relations with a fellow associate and you can have a harmonious relationship.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get to the beauty or barber shop of your choice today and look more charming, which will reflect in a more positive attitude. Be direct, yet calm later this evening with your mate and thereby relieve any difficulties.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The evening today would be the best time for having guest into your home. Make sure that everything there is sparkling and glows with the appearance that you spend many an hour keeping it in shape.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to see one today you are fond of, however, have not seen in a long-time and thereby you can renew the companionship which did exist. Take it easy tonight and be happy in the company of your loved ones.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is a good day today to analyse where you are headed and discover the best method of operation to gain your desire to be successful. Rid yourself of whatever deters your progress and gain the insight of a bigwig.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Tap your subconscious today and bring out those original qualities you sometimes express and thereby you can gain the acknowledgement of those in authority. Later this evening you can have a relaxing time with your loved ones.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are wondering what to do today to gain your finest ambition. So take this to devise a course of action which will get you prosperity. Take some action and everything will be fine for you to become successful.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye.

Oil refinery will expand to meet growing need

By Ghaila Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company General Manager Abdul Wahab Zu'bi said Saturday that the company will expand its refinery in Zarqa and four more to establish a new refinery in Aqaba. Mr. Zu'bi said the study showed that the Aqaba refinery plan proved unfeasible and that increasing the capacity of the existing company, through an expansion plan whose cost is estimated at \$400-\$500 million, was the only viable solution.

He explained that the expansion will entail extension of the existing company's field of operations. In an interview with Al Rai Arabic daily last week, Mr. Zu'bi said that the feasibility study estimated that the cost of an independent petroleum refinery company in Aqaba would be around \$2.8 billion. The project would also require new infrastructure and a high investment cost, besides being far from the investment centre, in the capital, and the heavy traffic involved in its operations, which made the expansion choice more cost effective.

Palestinian team meets Jordanian officials

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Palestinian Trade Promotion Institution, led by its director Saeed Haifa, held talks Saturday with Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb on trade between the two sides and also toured the Sahab industrial city.

Discussions with the minister dealt with Israeli obstacles on the Jordan River bridges. Such hindrances have to date hampered the flow of goods between Jordan and Palestine. Mr. Haifa said that the 35-member delegation's visit to Jordan was aimed at securing further Jordanian support for continued cooperation between the two sides in all domains and in order to help delegation members examine the types of goods which are useful for the Palestinian market. Discussions also covered ways to promote the role of the private sector in the two countries and prospects for launching joint investment projects. Mr. Haifa also met Saturday with Assem Hindawi, director general of the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) and toured a number of industrial businesses. Mr. Hindawi briefed the visitors on the JIEC's work and programmes saying that the corporation would place its experiments in the creation of industrial cities at the disposal of the Palestinian side. He said that the Sahab industrial city groups 400 different factories with a total of JDI billion capital. Mr. Haifa said that Israel has been exporting \$2.220 million worth of goods to the Palestine self-rule areas annually while Jordan has been allowed to export \$20 million worth of its products to the Palestinians. He stressed that the Palestinian side is determined to end this unjust situation and boost Jordanian exports to Palestine.

U.S. banking allowed to extend business to other sectors

NEW YORK (AFP) — New regulations will allow some U.S. banks to extend their business activities in key sectors such as stocks, insurance and real estate sales, a key U.S. banking regulator has said.

"Banking must move forward and move forward now," Eugene Ludwig, of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), said on introducing the new rules.

Under the new regulations, national banks — as opposed to holding companies — will have the right to petition the OCC for the right to provide additional services.

The OCC will consider applications on a case-by-case basis. This expansion of banking industry activities may meet with extensive resistance for Congress as well as industry groups that feel the new rules allow banks to impinge on their sectors.

"The committee can be expected to review the proposed regulations with an open mind, particularly as they affect safety and soundness concerns," House Banking Committee Chairman Republican Jim Leach said.

Mr. Leach said the hearings will determine whether the new rules are appropriate. His Senate counterpart, Alfonse D'Amato, said the proposed regulations could expose banks to excessive risk.

Despite trying to do so for years, Congress has not repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, which since 1933 has separated commercial and investment bank activities.

"While elements of the new OCC regulations clearly are a step toward common sense, it is conjectural whether the courts will pass muster on such sweeping regulatory discretion," Mr. Leach said.

the new regulations, the Wall Street Journal has reported.

The Federal Reserve (Fed) regulates bank holding companies, while the OCC's jurisdiction extends to national banks. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation regulates a third category of U.S. banks.

The Fed has already eased Glass-Steagall by allowing the commercial banks under its supervision to increase their revenues from securities to 10 per cent.

Last spring, a high-level monetary policy official had said that limit would probably be raised after the presidential elections to compensate for congressional stalemate on Glass-Steagall reform.

According to the Wall Street Journal, that ceiling could soon be raised to 25 per cent.

Investment inflows totalled JD330m in 10 months, minister says

** ACCORDING TO Deputy Prime Minister and Higher Education Minister Abdullah Ensour, more than JD330 million in total investments flowed into the Kingdom during the first ten months of this year. The amount, he said, is between 20 to 22 per cent higher than the JD260 million total of investment that flowed during the same period. Dr. Ensour expected the inflow of investments during this month and December to increase by a third or a quarter and, consequently, the overall rise over the first ten months of 1995 would be 25 per cent as a result of the economic reform package.

Basing his statement on figures and economic indicators, Dr. Ensour said that of the new investments, the equivalent of JD60 million were invested by non-Jordanians directly into the manufacturing sector. Another JD60 million from foreign sources were invested in the stock market, the deputy premier added.

Dr. Ensour, who is also the president of the Economic Development Council, indicated that the drive towards developing the free zones in Jordan was not enough and that "the slow pace in this drive is a shortcoming that we should be blamed for." He called for making wider expansions in the free zones and for selecting a whole governorate, such as Aqaba or Maifraq, and turning it totally into a free zone.

He stressed the importance of cooperation between the Lower House and the government to speed up the passage and issuance of the economic laws together in order to step into a modern economic cycle. He emphasised that it will be of no benefit to approve one law and not the other and that all of them should be approved at one time. The laws cover financial securities, customs, companies, free zones, anti-monopoly and safeguarding public funds. Of prominence in these laws is "that the government intervention will be very minimal as the government responsibility will be cancelled in the companies' law," Dr. Ensour explained.

Asked about taxation, Dr. Ensour said that customs tariffs will be gradually dropped with sales tax increasing. He noted that this step is much fairer and would lead to "social peace." Dr. Ensour stressed that amending or introducing economic legislation is only a part and not all of the reform programme (Al Aswaq).

Israel opens phone service to competition

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has opened international phone calling to competition for the first time, awarding licences to two multinational consortia to compete with Bezeq, the state-controlled monopoly.

"It will lead to a real revolution," Communications Minister Limor Livnat told a news conference. "It's just the first step in a total opening up of the local telecommunications market."

The two groups, comprising Israeli and foreign companies, will begin services in about seven months. Israelis will be able to choose freely and will enjoy much lower phone rates than now.

A ministry official said price of a one-minute call to the United States at peak hours would fall to 0.62 to 0.65 shekel a minute, compared with Bezeq's current rate of 3.53 shekels. The tender marks the latest step in the government's whittling down of the telephone monopoly once in the hands of Bezeq Israel Telecom. A second mobile phone service licence was awarded to a Bezeq competitor in 1994.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/11/1996											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENT
252.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.42	2	140	34580	245.50	247.00	1.50	0.6
1.350	880	MID-EAST INV. BK.	68.3	0.00	18	15500	16205	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.0
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.0	6.39	1	50	109	2.00	2.15	0.15	7.5
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.7	2.51	9	2648	12597	4.77	4.75	-0.02	-0.4
3.040	2.450	JOR. INVEST. BANK	18.1	0.00	8	225	566	3.50	3.50	0.00	0.0
1.200	0.850	JOR. GULF BANK	5.7	7.37	36	90350	84605	0.92	0.95	0.03	3.2
4.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.5	0.00	8	890	3234	3.63	3.64	0.01	0.3
3.800	3.000	JOR. INV. FIS. BANK	17.5	0.00	1	100	324	3.24	3.24	0.00	0.0
1.550	1.000	WILADIA. INV. BK.	9	0.00	25	21183	26247	1.30	1.30	0.00	0.0
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 186.64 %CHG: +0.43											
2.910	1.840	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.2	10.87	2	350	644	1.65	1.84	0.19	11.5
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 117.89 %CHG: -0.05											
1.900	1.480	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.8	7.69	11	2442	3828	1.55	1.56	0.01	0.6
2.500	2.260	HIMES MINERALS	12.9	0.00	2	100	242	2.50	2.52	0.02	0.8
6.950	6.000	VEHIC. OWNERS FED.	10.9	5.69	2	90	594	6.15	6.15	0.00	0.0
1.950	1.080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	11	4750	5405	1.12	1.14	0.02	1.8
1.280	0.990	JORDAN INFL. TRAD.	29.8	0.00	3	318	185	0.58	0.58	0.00	0.0
2.500	1.610	MID. EAST HOTELS	71.1	0.00	1	500	825	1.74	1.65	-0.09	-5.2
3.660	3.130	ARAB INFL. INV. EDUC.	13.9	5.68	12	9100	31882	3.48	3.52	0.04	1.2
1.270	0.960	SABRA EDUCATION	9	0.00	5	2400	2495	1.05	1.04	-0.01	-0.9
2.420	1.690	UNIFIED CO.	9.2	5.75	6	1400	2420	1.70	1.74	0.04	2.4
1.200	0.820	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	3	3000	2640	0.86	0.88	0.02	2.3
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 107.79 %CHG: +0.27											
3.770	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.6	3.07	9	1055	3414	3.23	3.26	0.03	0.9
10.550	8.720	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	9.3	8.71	6	780	7148	9.15	9.19	0.04	0.4
1.590	1.150	WOLLEN INDUSTRIES	55.1	0.00	6	3700	4531	1.21	1.24	0.03	2.4
8.150	6.400	JOR. WOODST. MILLS	8.8	3.62	1	100	690	6.90	6.90	0.00	0.0
4.870	3.050	ARAB PSYCH. INST.	17.0	6.45	26	6899	20618	3.16	3.30	0.14	4.4
2.400	1.600	JOR. PIPES MANUF.	8.9	7.45	2	270	434	1.61	1.62	0.01	0.6
12.650	8.900	ARAB CHEM. DISTR.	23.1	4.55	1	50	423	8.90	8.45	-0.45	-5.1
8.000	4.250	DAR ALMAHA DV. INV.	12.0	9.32	10	1500	6597	4.30	4.40	0.10	2.3
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.0	0.00	3	450	1445	3.22	3.22	0.00	0.0
1.950	1.050	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	7.7	9.16	3	2000	32919	1.11	1.13	0.02	1.8
1.090	0.550	NATIONAL INDS.	8.1	10.91	2	1250	688	0.55	0.55	0.00	0.0
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 110.07 %CHG: +0.20											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 147.24 %CHG: +0.33											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/11/1996											
790	440	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	23.3	0.00	1	200	116	0.58	0.58	0.00	0.0
950	440	NATL. COMM. CENTERS	2	0.00	8	4050	2041	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.0
930	700	UNION INV. 501	67.9	0.00	1	780	767	0.70	0.71	0.01	1.4
1.110	400	ARAB INV. INVEST.	10.0	0.00	10	49718	20125	0.40	0.40	0.00	0.0
950	600	AL-DAMJITH 752	16.0	0.00	7	8500	3900	0.70	0.71	0.01	1.4
640	340	JOR. INDS. MATCH-JENCO	9	0.00	1	500	190	0.36	0.38	0.02	5.6
660	510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	1	1700	1012	0.59	0.59	0.00	0.0
1.760	1.300	NATL. CHOCOLATE	2	0.00	3	7150	9295	1.30	1.30	0.00	0.0
1.100	430	NATL. MULT. ENG. NAMICO	2	0.00	27	45400	19288	0.44	0.42	-0.02	-4.5
810	430	MOYKAY DIES & MOULDS	2	0.00	1	250	133	0.53	0.53	0.00	0.0
1.080	750	JORDAN STEEL	2	0.00	8	7800	5772	0.75	0.74	-0.01	-1.3
780	430	ARAB ELECT. INDS.	2	0.00	2	2500	1200	0.48	0.48	0.00	0.0
1.330	1.020	UNION TOBACCO 752	2	0.00	4	1400	909	1.04	1.04	0.00	0.0
840	580	RAST PEARL 553	2	0.00	3	1400	317	0.58	0.58	0.00	0.0
830	400	INDS. ENG.	24.6	0.00	16	14300	5803	0.40	0.40	0.00	0.0
950	800	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	56.2	0.00	1	15000	12000	0.82	0.80	-0.02	-2.5
1.500	530	MID. EAST COMPLEX	7.5	0.00	13	59900	38861	0.63	0.64	0.01	1.6
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 126 223218 121727											
Legend: ↑ New 12 months high ↓ New 12 months low N Listed during the past 12 months P 1/2 price is 100 or more G Negative P/E E Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year											

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JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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NAHCT

EXFRIP

BIUMED

My wife doesn't understand me

THE SYMPATHETIC BARTENDER WAS ALSO THIS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: CHICK GAWKY FLURRY SCROLL
Answer: The fellow grease monkeys called him - "SLICK"

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Novotna, Hingis roar into WTA semis

NEW YORK (R) — Jana Novotna and Martina Hingis — the hottest players in women's tennis — both blazed their way to easy victories on Friday to reach the semifinals of the \$2 million WTA Tour Chase Championships.

Novotna, winner of three successive tournaments in a span of five weeks, demolished her soon-to-be former doubles partner Arantxa Sanchez Vicario 6-0, 6-3 with an irresistible blend of groundstroke and net play virtuosity.

The 16-year-old Hingis, coming off a tournament triumph of her own in Oakland that pushed her to fifth place in the rankings, showed Japan's Kimiko Date into retirement with a 6-1, 6-2 drubbing (see separate story).

The twin trouncings set up contrasting semifinals for programme at Madison Square Garden.

The 28-year-old Novotna, whose torrid surge has taken her to a career-high number three in the rankings, goes against world No. 1 Steffi Graf.

Hingis faces fellow-teenager Iva Majoli, a 19-year-old Croat, in the up-and-comers side of the draw.

Victory was especially sweet for Novotna, who ended a skein of seven successive singles defeats to Sanchez dating back more than five years.

"It's a long time since I beat her," said Novotna, who has teamed with Sanchez to win three Grand Slam doubles titles in a partnership that is ending after this tournament.

"I couldn't have picked a better time to do it," added the Czech, whose losses to Sanchez this year included semifinal setbacks at the

French Open and in the Olympics.

Novotna dominated the usually steady Spaniard from the start, blunting Sanchez's passing shots with dazzling net play.

When she was not placing volley winners and smashing overhead putaways, Novotna was driving the ball deep into the corners to dictate rallies.

The points came with such swiftness that 13 minutes into the match the fifth-seeded Czech led 5-0. The sixth game was the first in which Sanchez even reached deuce — and that was after squandering a 0-40 lead to the rampaging Novotna.

"Basically, in the first set I didn't miss a ball," said Novotna, who extended her match-winning streak to 14 and improved her season singles record to a mighty 54-12.

Sanchez offered no excuses for the lopsided loss.

"I think normally when you lose a match you are disappointed," said the 25-year-old Sanchez, who still leads their career series 8-7.

"But today, Jana played better than me and that's the way the match went. Everything worked out well for her and nothing went right for me."

Novotna hopes her roll continues against Graf, who retired during their singles final in Philadelphia last week because of back spasms after losing the first set to the Czech.

"I've still got a long way to go and there is Steffi in the way," said Novotna, who trails Graf 25-4 head-to-head. "But if I keep playing like I am, there is a good chance."

Date has no regrets after last match

NEW YORK (R) — Kimiko Date said she had no regrets about leaving the tennis life behind following her straight-set defeat to rising star Martina Hingis on Friday at the season-ending WTA Chase Championships.

"I'm not happy or sad," said Date, who waved cheerfully to the crowd of 12,116 at Madison Square Garden that saluted her after she fell 6-1, 6-2 to Hingis in the quarter-finals.

"I'm free of everything. I'm just looking forward to many things I want to try. I'm just looking forward."

The 26-year-old Date had announced earlier this season that this would be the final tournament of her seven-year career, and the tour threw an on-court retirement party for her following her first-round match Tuesday.

But Date's life after tennis was delayed three days as she prolonged her career with a first-round win over second seed Monica Seles, who quit in the first set due to her injured shoulder.

Date was overmatched against the 16-year-old Hingis on Friday, but the Japanese star said she felt no disappointment since she had given her best.

"Hingis has so much power I was kind of overwhelmed," Date said through an interpreter. "There was nothing I could



Japan's Kimiko Date returns a shot from Switzerland's Martina Hingis in the Chase Championships at New York's Madison Square Garden (Reuters photo)

do."

Date said it was not relief she felt at the end of the match, but pride.

"I didn't feel that relieved," she said. "I was just glad for what I accomplished."

The 26-year-old Date, currently ranked ninth after reaching a career-best number four last year, established a batch of firsts as Japan's greatest player.

Among her many achievements, Date was the first Japanese to reach the Wimbledon semifinals (1996) and the French Open semifinals (1995).

In 1994 she became the first Japanese in 21 years to appear in a Grand Slam singles semifinals when she advanced to the final four at the Australian Open, a feat last achieved by Kazuko Sawamatsu at

the 1973 Australian Open.

Date said she was pleased that she could make her farewell appearance at the WTA Tour Championships.

"I was just happy that I was able to be on court at the year-ending tournament, as one of the top 16 players," she said.

"Now is the beginning of the second stage of my life. This (tennis) career seemed very long, but in fact it was very short. I feel both ways."

Asked what she might miss about tennis, Date said: "Playing under big pressure in important tournaments and travelling a lot. I won't be able to see that much of all the friends I made in my career."

"But I'm looking forward to my future life much bigger."

Van Basten joins Chelsea — but only briefly

LONDON (R) — Marco Van Basten joined Ruud Gullit's Chelsea on Friday but, to the disappointment of fans at the Stamford Bridge Club, he left after just two hours.

Van Basten, one of the world's great strikers until a persistent ankle injury cut short his career and forced him to retire in 1995, trained with the Premier League side.

The trademark poise and balance had not deserted the 32-year-old and for an hour Chelsea fans at the training ground were left dreaming a fully-recovered Van Basten had become Gullit's latest big-name signing.

But at the end of the session, Gullit, who played with Van Basten at AC Milan and in

the Dutch European championship-winning side of 1988, acknowledged his friend was just passing through.

"Marco just came to visit us," the Chelsea player-manager said. "It was good for us to have him, the excitement it generated was okay and it was nice for him to have contact with football again."

"It's been a long time since he has played and he was quite satisfied with his performance. But he just came to visit me, to join in."

"When we were at Milan that was how it was," Gullit said.

"If you had some friends they could join in and have some fun."

Gullit faces test of title hopes

LONDON (R) — Chelsea manager Ruud Gullit, attempting to bring the English League title back to Stamford Bridge for the first time in 42 years, exhibited a ruthlessness this week that has been the hallmark of all the great managers of the past.

Gullit has reinforced his squad this season with the signing of Italians Gianluca Vialli, Roberto Di Matteo and Gianfranco Zola.

He recouped some of his 13-million-pound (\$21.9 million) outlay by selling last season's top scorer John Spencer to London neighbours Queens Park Rangers for 2.5 million pounds (\$4.2 million), letting midfielder Gavin Peacock go to QPR on a month's loan with a view to a permanent 1.6 million pounds (\$2.7 million) move and letting out-of-favour striker Mark Stein rejoin his former club Stoke, also initially for a month.

The South African-born,

30-year-old Stein, who cost Chelsea 1.5 million pounds (\$2.5 million) when he joined them in October 1993, was the third departure from Stamford Bridge in less than 24 hours and left just one day before league leaders Newcastle United were due to visit in one of Chelsea's most important matches of the season.

Gullit has also had a row with team captain Dennis Wise and has made it clear he believes that the good of the team comes before the wishes of individuals in his set-up.

Zola, Chelsea's new 4.5 million pounds (\$7.6 million) signing, makes his home debut and will be facing his old Parma team mate Faustino Asprilla in the Newcastle side, while Newcastle will also be boosted by the return of England striker Alan Shearer, back after a month out following groin surgery.

Like Gullit, Newcastle boss Kevin Keegan has a

popular public persona but has also shown a ruthlessness — even a stubbornness — which may not yet have brought any silverware to St. James' Park but has helped to transform Newcastle from a lowly team in the old second division to championship challengers and probable UEFA Cup quarter-finalists.

While Chelsea have to go back to 1970 for their last major domestic success and Newcastle to 1955 when they won the FA Cup for the fifth time, such are the ambitions of both teams this season that for once the north London derby between Arsenal and Spurs this weekend is matched in both glamour and importance by another game in the capital.

Arsenal cannot be ruled out as title contenders but a win for Chelsea — and certainly for Newcastle — would firmly underline their chances.

Jones wins WBC light heavy title

TAMPA (R) — Roy Jones, regarded as the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world, stepped up in weight and found better competition, but still managed to win a unanimous decision over Mike McCallum and capture the vacant World Boxing Council light heavyweight title Friday.

Jones, who normally fights at 168 pounds (76

kg), stepped up to the 175-pound (79 kg) division to fight the Jamaican former three-time champion.

Relying on superior boxing skills instead of his raw punching power, Jones floored McCallum late in the 10th round and went on to easily outdistance the slower challenger.

Jones, also the International Boxing Federation super middleweight champion, improved to 34-0 with 29 inside the distance. He didn't put the IBF title on the line and has 30 days to decide if he wants to schedule to defend it or relinquish it.

McCallum, who fell to 48-1, mounted little offence after the third round and appeared in awe of the champion's superior hand speed.

The fight was scored by six judges following a pre-fight dispute between the Florida Boxing

Commission and the World Boxing Council. Each of the three Florida judges had the bout 120-107, WBC judge Marty Denker had it 116-111.

Tommy Kaczmarek scored it 119-108 and Barbara Perez saw it 117-110.

Jones, a Floridian, admitted he was cautious in his tactics.

"Mike's a technician. Why go out and take a crazy chance with a guy that I could outbox?" Jones said. "I want to learn. I haven't had a chance to be in the ring with someone as talented, skillwise, as Mike McCallum."

Jones began fighting out of the corner in the middle rounds, choosing to counter McCallum's punches with combina-

tions of his own.

"He showed movement. He showed pressure. He had a great jab," Jones said. "I could have blocked the jab more. I could have counter-jabbed more. I wasn't going to come in and kill myself. Plus, I have a lot of respect for Mike McCallum."

After the wear and tear of Jones's punches slowed McCallum, the champion used a short right to the chin to floor the challenger. McCallum beat the count easily, but was rocked again in the waning seconds of the final round.

"The way to beat him was with pressure," Jones added. "He was the man. I'm the man now."

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NAME : DIANE, lost on Tuesday 19th Nov. at 22:00 in the TLA'AL ALI area near the new Telecommunication Center.

RACE : Bassett (hound).

SEX : Femal. COLOUR : Black . Brown and White Wearing a pink necklace around her neck.

If you find her please call 676665 or mobile No. 07944047 . A reward will be given.

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Chairman Board of Directors

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA PHILADELPHIA 1 THE QUICK & THE DEAD Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 PHILADELPHIA 2 TOM CRUISE.....in MISSION IMPOSSIBLE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 699238 PLAZA SEAN CONNERY...in THE ROCK (IN DOLBY STEREO) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" INDEPENDENCE DAY (IN DOLBY STEREO) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:45 CONCORD "2" BRAVEHEART Shows: 3:15, 6:00, 9:00	Ammoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimeh & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. Theatre is closed Friday, Saturday & Sunday For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Dana Barros of the Boston Celtics tries to dish off a pass as Hersey Hawkins (rear) of the Seattle SuperSonics reaches to knock the ball away in first half NBA action in Boston (Reuters photo)

O'Neal leads Lakers past crippled Spurs

INGLEWOOD, California (R) — Shaquille O'Neal scored 29 points in the Los Angeles Lakers' 96-86 victory over the San Antonio Spurs Friday, then said it wasn't good enough.

Asked about not being able to put the injury-riddled Spurs away, O'Neal said: "I don't make excuses. We don't have the killer instinct we're supposed to have. We just have to learn how to put lesser teams away. We have to take care of the ball and put those kind of guys away."

Eddie Jones scored 23 points and Nick Van Exel added 14 points and nine assists for Los Angeles, which won for the fourth time in five games and is off to its best start since opening the 1991-92 season 9-3. O'Neal was 13-for-19 from the field.

Dominique Wilkins had 19 points and 13 rebounds and will perdue scored 10 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter for the Spurs, who have lost four straight and seven of their last eight games.

Avery Johnson contributed 15 points and 14 assists for San Antonio, which played without injured starters David

Robinson, Sean Elliott and Charles Smith and key reserve Chuck Person.

Robinson, who started the season on the injured list with a lower back strain, saw a doctor in Los Angeles earlier in the day who said Robinson's rehabilitation programme is progressing well and the All-Star centre could be back in action as soon as early December.

The Spurs, the lowest-scoring team in the league, were held under 90 points for the ninth time in 11 games this season.

"We'll be all right when we get Robinson back," Spurs coach Bob Hill said. "This has been a joke. It's been a frustrating month to say the least. I was thrilled with the way we played. I think that with the four guys that are out, under the circumstances, we had a chance to win the game."

San Antonio pulled within 87-81 with 2:50 to go but O'Neal made one free throw and hit a turnaround jumper to help Los Angeles regain a nine-point lead 40 seconds later. O'Neal was just 3-of-10 from the line.

In Sacramento, Ike Austin's free throw with 24.8 seconds remaining

broke a double-overtime tie and propelled the Miami Heat to their third straight win, 111-108 over the Kings.

Miami appeared to have the game won in the first overtime period when Hardaway hit two free throws with 10.8 seconds remaining to make it 100-97. But Richmond forced a double-overtime when he nailed a three-pointer with one second on the clock.

In Boston, Shawn Kemp scored 22 points and grabbed 13 rebounds and Gary Payton added 22 points and nine assists as the Seattle SuperSonics won their 10th straight game, routing the Celtics 118-91.

Rick Fox tied a season-high with 21 points for Boston, which has lost four straight overall, and four straight to Seattle. Antoine Walker added 15 points and a season-high 10 rebounds for the Celtics, who shot just 32 percent (27-of-83) from the floor.

At Washington, Juwan Howard had 18 points, 10 rebounds and six assists as the Bullets raced to a 7-0 lead and never trailed in an 88-76 defeat of the Philadelphia 76ers.

Marseille hold leaders PSG

PARIS (AFP) — Paris Saint Germain's title challenge took a knock Friday as Olympique Marseille held them to a goalless draw at the Parc Des Princes, although the leaders extended their lead to four points.

But Monaco virtually eradicate that lead, which stood at 11 points just three weeks ago, if they defeat struggling Nancy on Sunday.

PSG went into Friday's match resolved to make up ground lost in recent games on the back of last week's 5-3 beating at Bordeaux.

But although they had most of the play, their strike force of Patrice Loko and Panamanian Dely Valdes failed to get the better of in-form Marseille keeper Andreas Kopke before a 44,000 crowd.

The German international made a series of brilliant stops, in particular smothering a close-range effort Dely Valdes late in the first half. He then twice denied Brazilian midfielder Rai.

Friday's game was the first between the long-time rivals for three years following Marseille's period in the wilderness following the match-fixing affair, which saw relegated.

Prior to that, both clubs had vied for pole position in the French League.

Despite their position as underdogs Friday, Marseille extended their unbeaten run against PSG in the league to seven games.

Sampras back on track as Becker gets birthday blues

HANNOVER (AFP) — World No. 1 Pete Sampras beat French Open holder Yevgeny Kafelnikov 6-4, 6-4 on Friday to join birthday boy Boris Becker, Goran Ivanisevic and Richard Krajicek in the semifinals of the ATP Tour World Championship.

Sampras, beaten by Becker in a tight battle on Thursday, came good for his second preliminary win to emerge with a 2-1 mark in the round-robin phase of the \$3.3 million contest. It was the American's 500th career singles win and took 75 minutes.

The 25-year-old, bidding to add a third world champion's crown to his collection, will play Croatia's Ivanisevic, the biggest hitter in the game this year with some 1,500 aces, on Saturday for a place in the final.

Becker's 29th birthday bash was somewhat muted as he lost his 100 percent record here against Swede Thomas Enqvist, who replaced Andre Agassi when he quit with a virus after one losing match.

The 22-year-old Swedish Davis Cup contestant rose to the occasion superbly to give Becker his first taste of defeat here before 15,000 fans at the trade fair in this northern German city.

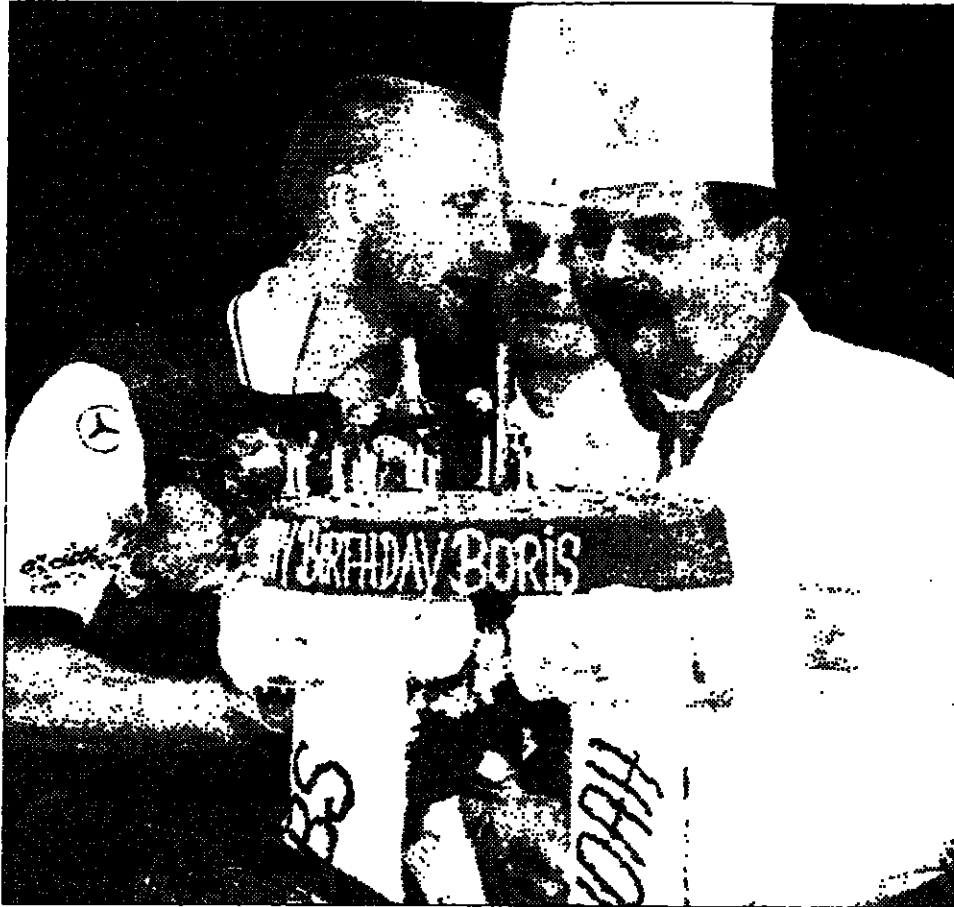
Packed crowds had twice cheered defending champion Becker on to wins earlier in the week in this season's grand finale, but Enqvist belatedly left his mark on the tournament as he won 6-3, 7-6 (7-1).

But Becker still goes through to the semifinal where he plays Dutchman Richard Krajicek, who saw off Thomas Muster 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (5/7), 6-3.

Moments after Becker's match finished, four chefs wheeled out a chocolate birthday cake and a singer led the crowd in a chorus of "happy birthday" to one of Germany's most popular sportsmen.

Becker's wife Barbra joined in the festivities and 15,000 fans clapped along to the music.

Becker afterwards put his below-par performance down to the fact that nothing was at stake against Enqvist. "Today was almost like a day off for



Boris Becker of Germany talks to cooks who offered a cake to him as he celebrates his 29th birthday during the ATP World Championships in Hannover. Becker reached the semifinals after his loss against Swedish Thomas Enqvist 6-3, 7-6 (Reuters photo)

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IMPALED ON THE FORK

East-West vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
♠ K 5 4
♥ K 5 4 3
♦ K 8 4
♣ A 7 2

WEST
♠ A 9 7 6
♥ A J 10
♦ A J 7 6
♣ Q 5

EAST
♠ Q J 10 8 3 2
♥ Q 9
♦ 10 9 8 3
♣ 4 3

SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ 8 7 6 2
♦ Q 2
♣ K J 10 9 8 6 4

The bidding:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
1NT Pass 4♠ Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♠
There's a saying in the Old Country: "If you drink the water, you die; and if you don't drink the water you die!" West found out exactly what that meant on this deal.
After West's one-no-trump opening, East decided that the 6-4 distribution would offer play for game, and got there by the most direct route. South, a far braver person

than either of us, sacrificed in five clubs where we would have been content to let nature take its course. West's double ended the auction.

With an opening lead in any other suit, declarer would have had no play. Not surprisingly, though, West chose to lead the ace of partner's suit, and thanks to the great dummy that hit the table, declarer had a fighting chance.

The opening lead was ruffed high in hand and the king and ace of clubs extracted the trumps. Declarer came to hand with a spade ruffed high and led a "four" diamond. Whether West chose to rise with the ace or duck, the contract could no longer be defeated.

Suppose West were to follow with a low diamond. Dummy's king would win, the queen of diamonds would be discarded on the king of spades and, as long as hearts were 3-2 and West had the ace, declarer would lose only two hearts. If, on the other hand, West were to rise with the ace of diamonds, two of the hearts in the closed hand would go on the kings of spades and diamonds, and declarer would lose only one trick in each red suit.

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN NOOR AL HUSSEIN
THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN JORDAN PRESENTS



THE EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

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ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH, 1996 AT 19:30 P.M.

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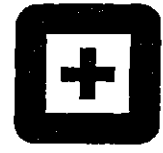
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Country	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Japan	7.0	7.5	8.0	9.0	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	14.0	15.0	16.0
Germany	10.0	10.5	11.0	12.0	13.0	14.0	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0
France	11.0	11.5	12.0	13.0	14.0	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0
Italy	12.0	12.5	13.0	14.0	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0
Spain	13.0	13.5	14.0	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0
Sweden	14.0	14.5	15.0	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0
United Kingdom	15.0	15.5	16.0	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0
United States	16.0	16.5	17.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0
Canada	17.0	17.5	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0
Belgium	18.0	18.5	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0
Netherlands	19.0	19.5	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0
Australia	20.0	20.5	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0
South Korea	21.0	21.5	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0
China	22.0	22.5	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0
India	23.0	23.5	24.0	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0
Brazil	24.0	24.5	25.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0
Argentina	25.0	25.5	26.0	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0
South Africa	26.0	26.5	27.0	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0
Indonesia	27.0	27.5	28.0	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0
Philippines	28.0	28.5	29.0	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0
Thailand	29.0	29.5	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0
Malaysia	30.0	30.5	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0
Singapore	31.0	31.5	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0
Hong Kong	32.0	32.5	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0
Taiwan	33.0	33.5	34.0	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0
South Korea	34.0	34.5	35.0	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0
China	35.0	35.5	36.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	44.0
India	36.0	36.5	37.0	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	44.0	45.0
Brazil	37.0	37.5	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	44.0	45.0	46.0
Argentina	38.0	38.5	39.0	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	44.0	45.0	46.0	47.0
South Africa	39.0	39.5	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	44.0	45.0	46.0	47.0	48.0